



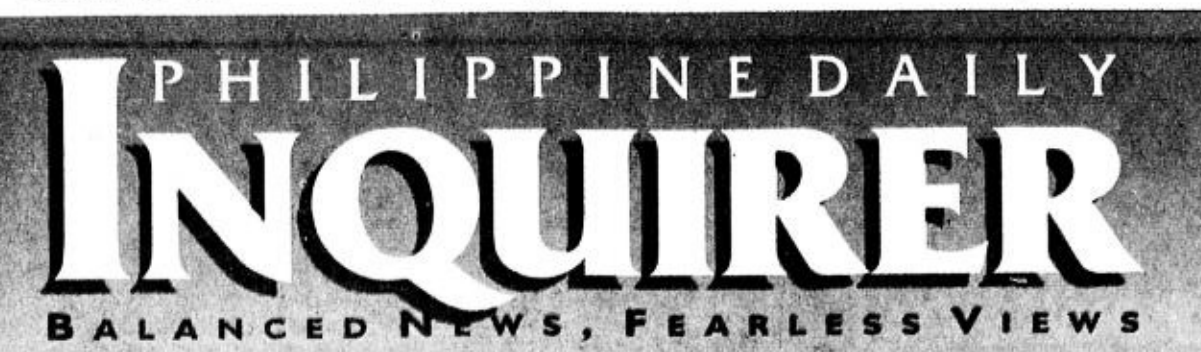
Filipino designer joins Oscars' fashion contest

BEVERLY HILLS, California—Her name is on the lips of numerous stars in Beverly Hills.

A year ago, Filipino Monique Lhuillier designed a wedding dress for Britney Spears and for actor Kevin Costner's new bride. On Sunday, an Oscar nominee will walk down the red carpet wearing one of her creations.

"A lot of celebrities don't want to see your FILIPINO/A6

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Monday, February 28, 2005 ★★ 90 pages / 9 sections Vol. 20 No. 82

P18

website: www.inq7.net

He defied Marcos order, inspired graft-busters

By Christine O. Avendaño
 and Armand N. Nocum

PAYING tribute to the late Francis Garchitorena, Sen. Joker Arroyo remembered yesterday the former Sandiganbayan presiding justice as a "brave man" who defied the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

HE DEIFIED/A22

Pal pins blame on Roldan

Says ex-solon sought P3-M ransom from boy's family

By Christian V. Esguerra

A SUSPECT in the kidnapping of a 3-year-old Chinese-Filipino boy said he was driving Dennis Roldan in a van when the former lawmaker talked to the boy's family by mobile phone, demanding a P3-million ransom.

In a five-page affidavit obtained by the INQUIRER yesterday, Albert Pagdanganan also claimed that a woman named "Suzette" was in the van at the time.

Police have claimed that a supposed girlfriend of Roldan, named Suzette See Wang, was involved in the kidnapping.

Pagdanganan is among seven people, including Roldan, under detention on kidnap-for-ransom charges in connection with the Feb. 9 abduction of the boy in Pasig City.

Described by police as a businessman and resident of Apalit, Pampanga, Pagdanganan said Roldan's group promised him P15 million once the ransom was paid.

Asked who planned the kidnapping, Pagdanganan in his affidavit said: "Dennis Roldan, Kapitán (barangay captain) Octavio Garces of Kamias, Quezon City, and a woman named Suzette."

Roldan's lawyer, Salvador Pano, said his client was innocent and was the victim of a frame-up.

Pagdanganan said he heard Roldan negotiating by phone on a ransom while he was driving the former actor, "Suzette" and Garces around Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City on Feb. 18, about nine days after the boy was abducted.

"To my knowledge, he (Roldan) was talking with the parents of the victim," Pagdanganan said.

Pagdanganan did not say in his statement how he came to know it was the boy's parents who were on the other end of the line.

In part, Pagdanganan's signed statement appeared to conflict with at least one aspect of the kidnapping case as narrated by police to reporters.

PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay told reporters on Friday that police had a video of Roldan and Wang as they were "going in and out" of a safe house in Pasay City, which the gang had allegedly used initially to hide the boy.

In his account, Pagdanganan said his group kept the kidnap victim on West Avenue, Quezon City, and in Tagaytay City.

PAL PINS/A21



WINNING START. Jennifer Rosales of the Philippines tees off during the final round of the LPGA Tour's season opener, the \$1-million SBS Open, at the Turtle Bay Resort in Kahuku, Hawaii.

Rosales bags 2nd LPGA career win

KAHUKU, Hawaii—Filipino Jennifer Rosales held off amateur Michelle Wie to capture the \$1-million SBS Open by two strokes for her second career LPGA Tour victory.

The colorful 26-year-old player from the Philippines fired a one-over 73 to finish at eight-under-par 208.

"I was excited to start the year and it turned out to be a pretty good week to start," said Rosales, who collected \$150,000 for the win. (See related story in Sports, Page A25.)

"I am pretty happy. I got my second win and it is just a good start for me this year."

An avid golfer herself, President

Macapagal-Arroyo gave high praise for Rosales.

"Jenny Rosales epitomizes the modern Filipino—highly competitive, goal oriented and blessed with extraordinary skills and unsinkable talent," Ms Arroyo said in Manila.

She added: "We commend her for ROSALES/A8



THE COLORFUL champ waves her trophy after finishing first at 8-under.

US troops also to blame for Manila's destruction

By Amando Doronila

THE BATTLE for the liberation of Manila began on Feb. 3 to 4, 1945 when American forces reached the outskirts of Manila. The US 37th Infantry Division, racing toward the Pasig River in the heart of Manila to clear the way for the triumphal entry of Gen. Douglas MacArthur, was delayed by unexpected

resistance from Japanese forces defending the city.

On Feb. 6, US press reports said Manila had fallen like "a ripe plum." According to British military historians Richard Connaughton, John Pimlott and Duncan Anderson, in their book "The Battle for Manila," The Associated Press reported on Feb. 5 that "American

troops reached the heart of Manila yesterday and raised the Stars and Stripes over the greatest Philippine capital for the first time in more than three years."

ANALYSIS

Determined to redeem his "I shall return" promise to Filipinos after he abandoned them during the Japanese invasion in 1942, MacArthur berated his troops, who

were racing in two pincers to Manila from Pampanga in the north and Tagaytay in the south, for a "noticeable lack of drive and aggressive initiative" (according to another book, "The Pacific War," edited by Bernard L. Nalty).

MacArthur had intended to celebrate his 65th birthday at the end of January

US TROOPS/A20



CANDLELIGHT FOR POPE. Children join their parents in offering candles and prayers for Pope John Paul II, who is recovering in a hospital after undergoing surgery.

RUDY ESPERAS

Longer hospital stay for Pontiff expected

ROME—Pope John Paul II's hospital stay "won't be brief" and it will be weeks before he can speak again following last week's tracheotomy, a Rome University doctor said in an interview published Sunday.

"No one would dream of taking him out of hospital (now)," Giancarlo Cianfrone, an ear, nose and throat professor, told the Corriere della Sera. "The recovery won't be brief."

It was the second time this month that the Pope was rushed to the hospital because of ill health.

The 84-year-old Pontiff underwent a tracheotomy after being taken to the Gemelli Polyclinic on Thursday with severe breathing problems. The operation involves cutting a hole in the patient's windpipe and inserting an L-

shaped tube to act as an airway.

The operation left him unable to speak and dependent on written messages as his only means of communication.

The Pontiff seems to have recovered well from the surgery, communicating and even joking with his entourage using a notepad.

However, Cianfrone said a longer convalescence was to be expected in view of the Pope's advanced Parkinson's disease, which risks cardiovascular and neuromuscular complications.

"It will be hard for the Holy Father to manage to breathe on his own (without the tracheotomy tube) for several weeks," Cianfrone said.

"I think that in a few weeks, LONGER/A8



Army soldiers won't part with Pikang

By Julie S. Alipala
 PDI Mindanao Bureau

MOUNT KARAWAN, In-danan, Sulu—She is definitely a soldier's best friend.

Pikang, a 5-year-old askal (mongrel), has saved the lives of the seven-man Jaguar unit of the Army's 104th Infantry Brigade in several operations, including the hunt for Abu Sayyaf

ARMY/A20

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms. Moderate to occasionally strong winds blowing from the northeast will prevail over Extreme Northern Luzon.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: D.J. YAP, PDI RESEARCH/02/28/05

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

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Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo	Mostly Cloudy
Bugala	Partly Cloudy	Rosario	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

GMA yet to decide on truce with MNLF

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Christian V. Esguerra, in Manila and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

AFTER getting the assessment of the military, President Macapagal-Arroyo will decide this week whether or not to declare a formal ceasefire to halt clashes between government troops and followers of jailed Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) leader Nur Misuari that have killed more than 70 people.

The President has ordered Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu to assess the military operations in Jolo, Sulu, to determine whether the government should declare a ceasefire to end the almost month-long hostilities with the Muslim rebels.

The President expects Abu to fly to Sulu by Tuesday or Wednesday and give her his recommendation before the end of the week.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the President felt it was important for Abu to personally assess the situation in



MALIK

Jolo before making a final decision on the call for a ceasefire.

Malacañang has so far turned down calls for an end to the military operations against the rebels because of fears for the safety of military personnel and civilians in the war-torn areas.

But Bunye stressed that the President had not closed the door to a ceasefire as seen from her move to send Abu to the battlefield.

In an interview over dzXL radio, Bunye justified the military operation in Sulu as part of the government's right to assert its authority in the area. "If we don't do this positive action, it is possi-

ble that they would again attack military forces in the area."

The military has deployed eight battalions with 3,000 soldiers for the Sulu offensive, which has been beefed up by 800 MNLF inter-greeds embedded in three Army battalions.

Part of the offensive is the attack on suspected lairs of the Abu Sayyaf which has claimed responsibility for the Valentine's Day bombings in Makati, Davao and General Santos cities.

In the absence of a formal ceasefire, local government officials have helped broker an informal truce between the military and the Muslim rebel group.

Sulu Gov. Benjamin Loong said the agreement reached between followers of Misuari and local Sulu officials was intended to prevent more casualties and avoid the displacement of more civilians.

The governor and some local officials met with Ustadz Habier Malik, leader of the armed group loyal to Misuari, somewhere in Sulu last week.

The local officials included Rep. Munir Arbi-son, board members Kadil Estino and Unni Ahmad and Luuk Mayor Abdurrahman Arbi-son.

"We asked him to refrain from attacking the government soldiers, and he said yes," Loong said.

"(He) agreed without question and without any condition," the governor added.

At least 70 combatants, including 31 soldiers, have been killed in clashes between government forces and Malik's group in Panamao town in Sulu the past weeks.

Brig. Gen. Agustin Dema-ala, chief of Joint Task Force Comet, said he was happy to hear about the forging of the agreement. "We will stop if they will stop," Dema-ala said.

But a top military official yesterday denied the reported ceasefire between government troops and supporters of Misuari.

"There is no such agreement," Lt. Gen. Alberto Braganza, Southern Command chief, said in an interview with ANC, while explaining that the ceasefire issue was "beyond me."

He said government troops were "relentlessly" hunting down members of the Misuari Breakaway Group headed by Malik and the Abu Sayyaf bandits who had attacked a military post.

"Malik is in hiding and the local folks and (civilian volunteer organizations) are hunting him down and we are hunting him down," the official said. "He does not have local support."

With an AP report

COPW ULAT IKA-5 ISANG MENSAHE SA GOBYERNO, SA CONSUMERS, SA MGA KOMPANYA NG LANGIS AT SA IPPs

BAKIT KAILANGANG SABIHIN NG GOBYERNO ANG KATOTOHANAN TUNGKOL SA VAT

Nakikiusap kami sa gobyerno na sabihin sa mga mamamayan ang katotohanan tungkol sa value added tax.

Magmula pa noong nakaraang Setyembre 2004, ipinaalam na namin sa ating mga consumers na hanggang hindi natin inilalahad ang tunay na halaga ng mga pangunahing serbisyo, mahaharap tayo sa fiscal crisis o krisis sa pananalapi gaya ng Argentina -nang mas maaga sa inaasahan.

Kailangan nating isiwalat sa mga consumers ang tungkol sa VAT dahil umaasa sila sa atin para sa transparency ng pagpapasiya kung gaano kamahal ang dapat na idagdag sa kanila. Sa pagkakaalam nila ng tunay na halaga, tatanggapin ng mga mamamayan ang karagdagang halagang ipapataw.

Dahil dito, nakikiusap kami sa NAPOCOR, PSALM TRANSCO, at sa DOE para sa buong-buong pagsisiwalat dahil kailangan naming ipaliwanag sa mga consumers ang mas mataas na halaga ng mga pangunahing serbisyo na bunga ng pagtaas ng singil ng VAT.

Ang COPW, ang Mababang Kapulungan at ang Senado ay sumasang-ayon na ang pagsisiwalat sa mga kaugnay na impormasyon ay kinailangan para mapadali ang pagdedesiyon.

Kaugnay nito, may tatlong bagay na dapat tandaan tungkol sa VAT:

1. Ang VAT sa kuryente ay magpapahirap sa mga gumagamit nito.
2. Ang VAT sa diesel, LPG, at gas ay magpapahirap pa lalo sa mga gumagamit nito.
3. Ang mga pribadong power generating companies (Gencos) at mga independent power producers (IPPs) ay dapat makibahagi sa mga pananagutan: Dapat ay magbayad sila ng corporate income tax at hindi malaya dito.

BAKIT PAHIHIRAPAN NG VAT SA KURYENTE ANG MGA CONSUMERS?

- Sinabi ng DOE na ang pagpataw ng 10% VAT sa mga generating plants at IPPs ay magresulta sa 40 sentimo pagtaas ng singil kada kilowatt-hour (KWH) sa Luzon grid.
- Ito ay bukod sa P1.15 kada KWH na ipinataw sa buong bansa noong Setyembre 2004 at sa pangalawang pagtaas ng 89 sentimo kada KWH na nakabitin pa sa Energy Regulatory Board, at karagdagan pang ikatlong pagtataas para itulot ang pagbawi ng Napocor sa P8 bilyong pagkalugi nito, bunga ng partial increase na ibinigay ng Napocor.
- Dahil sa pag-aari ng gobyerno, malaya ang Napocor sa lahat ng bayaring buwis. Gayon din, hindi nagbabayad ng excise tax na P1.63 kada litro ng diesel, 30 sentimo kada litro ng bunker fuel, at P4.35 kada litro ng gasoline na ginagamit para sa turbine plants nito.
- Para pakinabangan ang tax exemption privileges, binibili ng pribadong Gencos at ng IPPs ang kailangan nilang diesel, bunker fuel at gasoline sa Napocor.
- Lumilikha ang Napocor ng 2,260 megawatts (MW) ng hydro power at iba pang 835 MW ng geothermal power sa Luzon. Walang input tax credit ito sapagkat malaya ang Napocor sa buwis.
- Kaya kapag maipapataw na ang VAT sa kuryente, ang gobyerno ang magbabayad ng nasabing VAT. Ipapasa naman ng gobyerno ang karagdagang bayarin sa mga consumers.

BOTTOMLINE: GUSTO NAMING MALAMAN KUNG MAGKANO ANG IDADAGDAG NA SINGIL SA KURYENTE

BAKIT LALO PANG MAGPAPAHIRAP ANG VAT SA MGA CONSUMERS NG DIESEL, LPG, AT GAS?

Ang VAT sa mga produktong ito ay dagdag pang pahirap sa mga consumers sapagkat ito ay maidadagdag sa VAT sa kuryente.

- Ang Petroleum Industry Association - Petron, Shell, Caltex, at Total - ay pumapabor sa pagkakaroon ng VAT sa halip na excise tax sa diesel, LPG at gas.
- Tungkulin ng Petron, Shell, Caltex at Total na ipaalam ang halaga ng diesel, gasoline, at LPG sa mga gumagamit nito - **NANG MAY VAT AT NANG WALANG VAT.**
- Nararapat na ipaalam ng Petron, Shell, Caltex, at Total sa publiko kung magkano sa VAT ang ipapasa sa mga mamimili sa mga pump o gas stations, at kung magkano ang kanilang input tax credit. Ang Shell at Petron, na mga oil refineries, ay tumatamasa ng 80% input tax credit kaya sa bawat piso ng VAT, 20% lamang ang pinakamataas na dapat ipasa sa mga consumers. At sa mga bagong oil players na tumatamasa ng 85% input tax credit, 15% lamang ng kanilang VAT ang dapat ipasa sa mga consumers.
- Dahil sa isa lamang ang kanilang pinapaborang rate ng VAT na gagamitin sa gasoline, diesel at LPG, dapat ay sabihin ng Petron, Shell at Caltex ang single VAT rate na gagamitin nila. Ang magkakaibang VAT sa gasoline, diesel at LPG ay magdudulot ng kalituhan at misdeklaration.
- Mas madali ang pagpigil ng DOE sa pamumalit ng fuel products dahil ito ang nagbibigay sa mga accredited oil companies ng pahintulot na mag-angat at magluwas. Para mapahinto ang pamumalit, bigyan dapat ang Bureau of Customs ng kopya ng pahintulot na ito sapagkat nakasaad dito kung gaano karami, ang uri ng fuel, halaga ng bill of lading, ang kumarga nito at araw ng pagdating, at ang destinasyong bodega.

AT BAKIT NARARAPAT NA MAGBAYAD NG CORPORATE INCOME TAX ANG GENCOs AT IPPs?

Nagpapatakbo sila ng napakalaki't kapaki-pakinabang na negosyo. Lahat ay dapat makibahagi sa pasaning bayarin.

Kaugnay nito, hihilingin ng COPW ang pagsusog sa EPIRA Law na LAHAT ng bagong power plants, na isasapribado, ay dapat na magbayad ng corporate income tax sapagkat nakakakuha sila ng garantisadong kita na inaprobahan ng ERC.

Pinakiusapan din naming ang PSALM na magbigay ng listahan ng kontrata ng mga Gencos at IPPs kasama ang kanilang income tax holidays at kung hanggang kailan pa nila ito pakikinabangan.

Para sa kapakanan ng bayan at ng mga mamamayan, tiwala kami na ang pasya ng Mababang Kapulungan at ng Senado ay mangiibabaw at ang ipapasa nilang karagdagang buwis ay patas sa lahat para matakasan natin ang krisis na ito sa lalong madaling panahon, magkaroon ng trabaho, upang tuluyang umangat ang ating ekonomiya.



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Report details plot to bomb more facilities

By Christian V. Esguerra

A SMALL group of radical Islamic converts planned to bomb several targets in Luzon, including telecommunications and power facilities, allegedly as part of a well-organized and well-funded effort to establish Islamic areas outside of Mindanao, according to a Philippine National Police report.

The Rajah Sulaiman Movement (RSM) headed by Ahmad Islam Santos also purportedly targeted the international airport's Centennial Terminal, La Mesa dam and facilities of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Manila Electric Co. and the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

The group had also allegedly planned to bomb the National Power Corp. plant in Soal, Pangasinan, using a remote-controlled toy airplane to which an explosive device had been strapped, the 12-page report obtained by the INQUIRER from the PNP Intelligence Group (IG) said.

The report titled "Radical Balik-Islam Network" outlined the origin, connections and extent of operations of the band of Islamic converts known as RSM. It consolidated at least three case operation plans, namely, "Kamikaze, Quartermoon and Swordsman."

IG operatives could not tell why the supposed terrorist plots did not materialize. Ahmad Lomarda, an RSM member arrested in May 2003, told police he "failed to determine the cause because he lost contact" with one Ismael de Vera.

De Vera and a certain Ustadz Abubakar were the ones charged with carrying out the plan hatched as early as March 2003, the report said.

Police intelligence officials first learned of the existence of the RSM in November 2001 after 13 of its members were invited for questioning for allegedly operating a terrorist training camp in Anda, Pangasinan.

Among the 13 was Abdulwali Villanueva, ex-bodyguard of actor Robin Padilla, who was arrested last year in connection with the Superferry 14 bombing that killed at least 100 people. Villanueva was subsequently released.

"The primary objective of RSM is to establish Islamic cities in Luzon starting in Pangasinan and Tarlac provinces," the PNP report said.

Aside from a faction of the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front, this group of Islamic converts also allegedly maintains ties with the Jemaah Islamiyah, the Southeast Asian affiliate of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network.

PNB sells idle assets to US group for P4.8B

By Doris C. Dumlaog

PHILIPPINE National Bank has forged a deal to sell P4.8 billion worth of nonperforming assets to a consortium of Bank of America N.A. and Marathon Asset Management using the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) framework.

PNB, owned by tobacco and airline tycoon Lucio Tan and the government, which has a minority stake, said the sale was part of its strategy for improving its balance sheet.

"This SPV sale is part of our overall nonperforming asset resolution strategy to maximize the bank's recoveries from nonperforming loans and acquired assets, and improve the balance sheet," PNB president Lorenzo Tan announced yesterday.

"This sale, which attracted a good number of bidders, is a good indicator of the continued keen interest of international investors to participate in the country's distressed assets market," he said.

Out of seven indicative bids received from international investors invited to participate in the PNB auction, three investors were shortlisted to submit their definitive bids after conducting due diligence on the assets.

The consortium of Bank of America and Marathon Asset Management was eventually picked as the winner. Ernst & Young Transaction Advisory Services Inc. served as PNB's financial advisor for the sale.

Bank of America NA is a major financial institution in the United States. It is active in the distressed debt market in Asia.

Marathon Asset Management, on the other hand, is a registered investment advisor in the US which is active in the Latin American and the US distressed debt markets. It seeks to replicate its successful portfolio acquisitions in Asia, particularly in the Philippines.

The SPV Law, which took effect in April 2002 and expires on April 8 this year, intends to help banks get rid of their non-performing assets by waiving payments of certain taxes and reducing fees in the sale or transfer of assets. The law waived the documentary stamp tax, capital gains tax and e-VAT (expanded value-added tax) and likewise reduced the registration/transfer fees by 50 percent.

The Bankers Association of the Philippines has asked Congress to extend the law for two years.

Through the sale of its bad assets, PNB expects to bring down its bad loan portfolio from a high of P53 billion at the start of its rehabilitation and P37.9 billion as of end-2004 level to P24.3 billion by the end of this year.

Last year, PNB and other banks sold their loan exposure in National Steel Corp. to Indian-owned Global Infrastructure Holdings for P13.25 billion.

With a Reuters report

Shell, Petron hike fuel prices

MAJOR oil companies Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Petron Corp. increased the prices of their gasoline products by 60 centavos a liter and of diesel fuel and kerosene by 50 centavos a liter on Saturday and yesterday, respectively, following their competitors' adjustments last week.

Shell increased its prices at 12:01 a.m. Saturday, the same time third-largest oil firm Caltex Philippines Inc. did so.

Market leader Petron hiked prices

12:01 a.m. Sunday.

New player Flying V is set to increase prices at 6 a.m. today.

Total (Philippines) Corp. was the first to implement a price hike last Friday at 6 p.m.

Independent oil firms Eastern Petroleum Corp., Seoil Petroleum Corp. and Unioil Petroleum Philippines Inc. followed suit the next day.

The oil firms cited pressure from market forces, principally escalating prices of crude in the world, as the reason for implementing the price hikes.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products soared to an average of \$52.97 a barrel in the first 23 days of February, jumping almost \$6 a barrel from the January average of \$47.58 a barrel.

The price of MOPS-based diesel also climbed to a February average of \$53.82 a barrel, almost \$3 higher than the \$51.26 a barrel posted in January.

Abigail L. Ho

Congress still undecided on value tax exemptions

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATE and the House of Representatives are in a quandary over whether or not to lift the value-added tax exemptions being enjoyed by independent power producers.

With only three weeks to go before Congress goes on recess, both chambers are still deadlocked on President Macapagal-Arroyo's proposal to raise the VAT rate from 10 percent to 12 percent and remove its exemptions.

"The VAT war between the Senate and the House has now been reduced to one basic issue—the impact of the power VAT. And a looming battle on statistics should help this," said Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda.

The Senate wants to maintain the VAT rate at 10 percent but is eyeing the removal of the VAT exemption enjoyed by IPPs which would raise P28 billion in new revenues based on industry sales of P279 billion, or the same amount expected if the VAT rate were hiked to 12 percent.

But the House has proposed to increase the VAT rate and also lift the VAT exemptions to generate P80 billion in revenues.

The House has threatened to boycott the bicameral conference on the proposed 2005 budget unless the Senate hews its VAT bills closer to the lower chamber's version. The Senate, however, has stood firm on its position and accused the House of blackmail.

Salceda said the House had data from the National Tax Research Center and the National Statistics Coordination Board to prove its claim.

Salceda said that data from the NTRC and NSCB showed that the government would only get roughly P4 billion by lifting the VAT exemptions because power firms would only deduct their VAT payments on their inputs (P4 billion) while corporations that would shoulder the additional VAT from power firms would also offset these against their VAT payables (P20 billion). Companies are allowed to deduct the VAT they paid on raw materials and other inputs from their VAT dues from their sales.

In Cebu City, Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal has stood firm on his opposition to the proposed VAT increase and ignored the President's appeal to support it.

He told reporters on Saturday that his stand had not changed on House Bill No. 3355, which he described as "anti-poor." "Whether we like it or not, the prices of commodities will go up," said Vidal.

Last Feb. 17, President Arroyo reportedly dropped by the archbishop's residence and briefly met with Vidal before proceeding to a dinner with city officials at the Malacañang sa Subgo.

After the meeting, Secretary Cerge Remonde told a radio station that Vidal had softened his stand against a VAT increase. With a report from Jolene R. Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau

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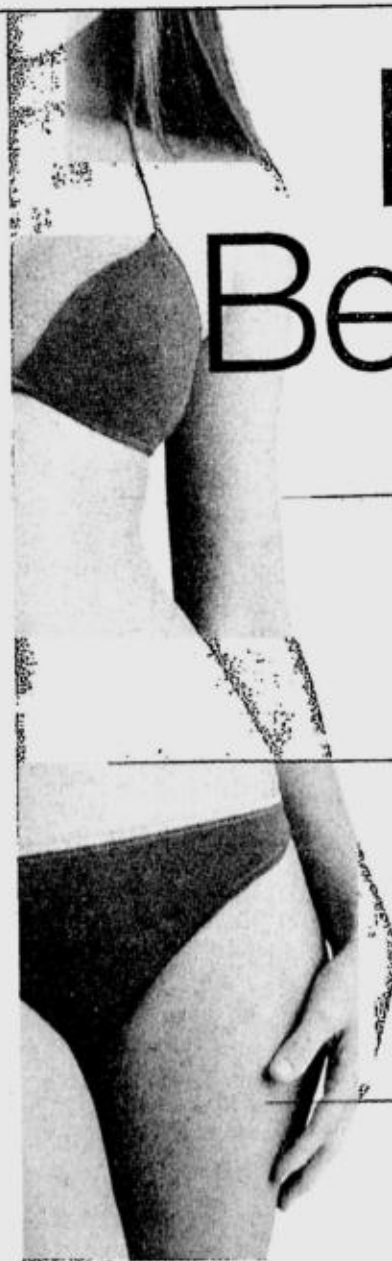
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Solons to sniff perfume for ill effects to health

Libanan said the President should certify the bill as urgent so that both the Senate and the House of Representatives could act on it with dispatch.

As for artificial musk, Villafuerte said its accumulation in the body could cause liver damage and could attack living tissues, interfere with brain function and

Him by FCUK, Fiorucci Loves You, Envy Me by Gucci, Boss by Hugo Boss, My Manifesto by Isabella Rosellini, Classique and Le Male by Jean Paul Gaultier, Nightlife by Joopl, Iri Blue by Melvita, Waterlove by Mexx, Sunset by Naomi Campbell, XS Pour Homme by Paco Rabanne, and Jamaica Man and Jamaica Woman by Puma.

RP will have new budget in 2 weeks, vows JDV

Since De Venecia continued to snub the bicameral conference on the budget, Piromental said, the House leadership seemed to favor another reenactment of the 2003 budget in order for the administration congressmen to have continued control.

With Norman Bordador

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worshipper of the God of Israel. Jesus comes and preaches in his own synagogue in Nazareth and is rejected—they think they know who he is and where he comes from. Jesus reminds them of the enemy of Israel healed by the graciousness of God in Elisha the prophet when there were many lepers in Israel, warning them that if they reject him, there will be many lepers in other lands who will come to believe in their stead. When they hear the truth of their own traditions, they seek to kill him but he leaves them and goes his way into his work among others. We see ourselves as the people of God. Have we turned and missed him altogether? Jesus, help us remember that we do not know you except in your Word and community and in how we treat our enemies. Make us who are really lepers in your sight whole and like your children washed in baptism. Amen.

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REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Writ of mandamus—Generally, the performance of an official act or duty which necessarily involves the exercise of discretion or judgment cannot be compelled by mandamus. However, a writ of mandamus may issue where there is grave abuse of discretion, manifest injustice, or palpable excess of authority. In this case, the Sandiganbayan did not commit grave abuse of discretion amounting to excess or lack of jurisdiction in issuing the assailed resolutions. The petitioners are not entitled to a writ of mandamus. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Callejo, Sr., Second Division, Corpuz vs Sandiganbayan, G. R. No. 162214, November 11, 2004] By R. B. Velasco

Senate to probe ATM fees charged by banks

SEN. MAR Roxas wants the Senate to look into the fees and surcharges imposed by banks on the country's estimated 15 million cardholders who use automated teller machines (ATMs).

Saying there was no need for bank depositors to be charged extra for using ATMs, Roxas has filed Senate Resolution No. 172 to stop banks from imposing the fees on ATM transactions.

Roxas yesterday said there was a need for Congress "to protect depositors from possible abuses" from the ATM fees.

Reasonable

"We recognize the contributions of ATMs to improved banking service.

However, ATM fees should be reasonable and disclosed fully to depositors before they are obligated to assume payment of the charges," said Roxas in a statement.

"There is really no need to subject depositors to various costs attached to the use of ATMs, considering that all ATM transactions can also be done over-the-counter [which] are not charged any fees," Roxas said.

The Senate committee on banks, financial institutions and currencies will act on Roxas' resolution.

Windfall

In his statement, Roxas cited a recent study showing that banks charge ATM fees ranging from P7 to P10.80 per transaction if a depositor is a client of another bank. Some banks even charge P2 for each ATM withdrawal by their own depositors.

"There are 15 million ATM users nationwide. Assuming banks collect an average of P100 in ATM fees each year from the 15 million, that's easily a windfall of P1.5 billion for the banks. And each additional P10 they collect from the 15 million would mean an extra bonanza of P150 million," Roxas said.

The ATM charges are on top of monthly service fees of P55 to P300 imposed by banks on accounts with minimum or average daily balances that fall below a required amount, the senator pointed out.

Interconnection

In the same statement, Roxas endorsed the interconnection bid of the country's three ATM networks—Megalink Inc., BancNet Inc. and ExpressNet Inc.

"We support the seamless interconnection and possible consolidation of the ATM networks, to the extent these would reduce operating costs which, in turn, could lead to significantly lower ATM fees, the elimination of unwarranted surcharges and ensure absolute banking convenience," Roxas said.

BancNet and ExpressNet are gearing up to interconnect their ATM networks. Christine O. Avendaño

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ADVENTURE GLX DSL	750,000	57,500	31,432	22,393	17,958	15,662	13,838
ADVENTURE GLS SPORT GAS M/T	795,000	79,250	33,318	23,737	19,035	16,602	14,668
ADVENTURE GLS SPORT DSL	805,000	80,750	33,737	24,035	19,275	16,811	14,853
ADVENTURE GLS SPORT GAS A/T	848,000	107,200	35,539	25,319	20,304	17,709	15,646
ADVENTURE GRAND SPORT GAS A/T	980,000	127,000	41,071	29,260	23,465	20,465	18,082
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LHULLIER

Filipino designer joins Oscars' fashion contest

From page A1

dress, your name, on too many other people," Lhuillier, 32, says in an interview at her Beverly Hills boutique. "They want to be special. So you have to choose who you want to target. It is a gamble."

And competition between the different fashion houses is tough.

"It is hard to secure a celebrity because every single major house that makes beautiful

clothes is in town in L.A. And some celebrities are under contract," Lhuillier notes. (See related story in *Entertainment*, Page A2-1.)

This year for the Oscars, Lhuillier is working with four celebrities.

The Lhuilliers of Cebu

Her parents are Cebu-based businessman Michel Lhuillier—of the string of pawnshops and jewelry stores in the Philippines—and

Amparito Llamas, a former fashion model in Manila.

Amparito recalls that her youngest in her brood of four was already a *fashionista* when she was 2 years old.

"She'd change clothes four times a day, and by 10, she knew fabrics and texture," reveals Lhuillier's stylish mom, in an interview published in the *INQUIRER*.

According to information on her website, Lhuillier was 15 when she left home to attend the prestigious Chateau Mont-Choisi boarding school in Lausanne, Switzerland. At 16, she moved to Los Angeles and enrolled at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising.

In 1977, Lhuillier's parents gave her \$10,000 as seed money and with the help of Tom Bugbee, a Californian she met as a student in Los Angeles and later married, parlayed that initial sum into a successful career, and now a business, in the United States.

Designing woman

In 1996, Lhuillier launched her first bridal collection, which was well-received by retailers and magazine editors.

In 2001, she designed her first evening collection, which has developed into a complete ready-to-wear line.

Today, Lhuillier's bridal line is available in department stores and specialty boutiques throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and Japan, according to her website.

She is considered one of the leading innovative fashion houses in terms of design, quality and brand image. In past issues, *Vogue* had singled her out as one of today's "it" designers.

It helps that her husband is an MBA degree holder whose forte is finance and entrepreneurship.

The couple, married for 10 years now, are in a successful partnership. Lhuillier concentrates on design while Bugbee is chief executive of her company which employs 75 people.

Celebrity clients

Last year, Lhuillier landed in the spotlight, thanks to wedding gowns she designed for Britney Spears and Christine Baumgartner, Costner's wife.

The Filipino designer also dressed four stars for the Emmy Awards, including Allison Janney from "West Wing" and Jamie-Lynn DiScala of "Sopranos."

During the selection for Spears' wedding gown, Lhuillier had to meet the star at a secret location to avoid the media.

The designer took 40 dresses to show her. Spears selected one and "we created something a little more elaborate, something special for her."

"We treat all of our celebrity clients with a lot of secrecy," Lhuillier says.

For 2005, two celebrities—an American film star and an entertainer, both keeping their engagements under wraps—will have Lhuillier design their dresses.

Actress Angelina Jolie was the first star that Lhuillier made a dress for—for the 2002 Golden Globes. Jolie, whom Lhuillier says she "loves" to work with, wore a black dress.

Sarah Jessica Parker, star of "Sex and the City," is a client. So are Jennifer Connelly, Janet Jackson, Debra Messing and Sharon Stone.

Lhuillier also designed world-acclaimed

Will history be made on Oscar night?

HOLLYWOOD, California—Here are some quirky facts about the 77th annual Academy Awards:

- Jamie Foxx, 37, could become the first performer in history to walk off with two acting Oscars on the same night: best actor for his acclaimed performance as soul legend Ray Charles in "Ray" and best supporting actor nomination for his role in the thriller "Collateral." The double nods make him only the 10th actor in Oscar history to be nominated in both leading and supporting categories in the same year, putting him in an elite class with the likes of Jessica Lange in 1982, Sigourney Weaver in 1988, Holly Hunter in 1993, Emma Thompson and Julianne Moore in 2002.

- Two actors scored double nominations for the 2005 Academy Awards: Foxx and veteran star Clint Eastwood. Eastwood, 74, won a best director nod for his drama about a troubled female boxer, "Million Dollar Baby," as well as a best actor nod for his role as trainer and aging fighter Frankie Dunn in the film.

- If Eastwood wins the best director award, he would be the oldest person in the 77-year history of the Academy Awards to do so.

- Eastwood could take home three Oscars on the big night: best director, best actor and best picture, as one of the film's producers.

- The 11 Oscar nominations garnered by Martin Scorsese's film "The Aviator" this year fall short of the record of 14 held jointly by 1997's "Titanic" and 1950's "All About Eve." Eight other films have won 13 nods in the past, including 1939's "Gone with the Wind," 1966's "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" "Mary Poppins" (1964) and "Forrest Gump" (1994). The highest number of Oscar statuettes ever won by a film is the 11 awarded to "Titanic." AFP

Filipino singer Lea Salonga's wedding gown when she got married in the United States last year.

Traditional with a twist

Lhuillier launched her first collection eight years ago when, for her wedding, she struggled to find just the right dress for herself.

The wedding dresses she designs tend to be "traditional but with a twist" with "something just modern" about them.

Her clients "feel sexy and beautiful in their wedding dress; they don't feel like they are wearing their mother's clothing."

Her gowns today sell for between \$1,500 and \$30,000 and are sold in Beverly Hills, London, Hong Kong and Singapore. But not yet in Paris.

Lhuillier dreams, however, of dressing new clients, including more stars.

"I have not worked yet with Nicole Kidman, but she is on my wish list, and also Cate Blanchett." AFP with a report from Connie E. Fernandez, PDI Visayas Bureau

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Baguio bounces back with Panagbenga festival

By PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—At the start of the 10th Baguio Flower Festival, or Panagbenga, parade on Saturday, a tourist from Metro Manila castigated one of the crowd-control officers for shooting him back into the crowd.

"I came here to watch your parade. *Kahit na may meningo kayo, nandito kami* (Even with your meningo crisis, we are here). Don't drive us away," he said.

Yes, the tourists were back, after the meningococemia scare, drawn to the dazzling annual festival that underwent a radical reinvention by Baguio-based filmmaker Kidlat Tahimik and the city's community of artists.

Visitors cheered high school and university students who danced through downtown Baguio in multicolored flower-inspired costumes.

On Sunday, visitors and residents were treated to a colorful parade of floral floats.

Slaying meningo

One of the street dancers on Saturday dashed about wearing a tattered shirt emblazoned with the word "meningococemia." Other dancers in traditional Igorot hunting gear "slew" the meningo character, drawing laughter from the crowd.

The local Korean community joined in the festival, with women in traditional Korean dresses carrying a huge Korean flag. Young women dressed as angels from San Rafael, Bulacan, came to promote their town's "Angel Festival." A contingent from Tabaco City in Albay also came.

Organizers led by Kidlat wanted the festival to return to its

"flower roots," which was why they chose "Balik Bulaklak" as the festival's slogan.

During the Saturday parade, Kidlat danced on Session Road in his *bahag* (native G-string) wielding a video camera.

"Panagbenga drew richer tourists. The bigger hotels are booked. The smaller ones got a smaller share of visitors. But this is a good rebound for Baguio [after the meningococemia scare]," said Jeanine Chan, president of the Baguio Association of Hotels and Inns.

Yearly pilgrimage

Many of the visitors who spoke to the INQUIRER said the deadly disease did not discourage them from making their annual pilgrimage to Panagbenga.

Alvin Ramsel from Laguna said he was encouraged to

come to the festival after news about the meningo outbreak began to disappear.

A 68-year-old woman said, "I come every year. No disease will scare me away. Besides, I live in La Union. I can always run back home if there's any problem here."

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano and former Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. joined the parade.

Durano, in a local television interview, praised the festival's 10th staging as the maturation of one of the country's top tourist attractions.

"Let's stay true to the cultural roots of Panagbenga," he said.

Many of the schools that participated in the parade stuck to Cordillera motifs.

The Baguio Central University dancers wore the traditional G-

string and red skirt of various Igorot tribes, but they painted their bodies in contemporary tattoos and carried colorful wands.

A contingent representing Kalinga tribes sported headdresses and coats decorated with the wings of hawks and the heads of snakes and lizards.

A few of the schools sported kaleidoscopic themes. The Saint Louis University College of Engineering and Architecture opted for an Egyptian motif.

The colorful street-dancing parade managed to weave through the huge crowd in under two hours—no mean feat for a festival that used to task spectators' patience because it used to last four hours.

Floral floats

Kidlat said they made sure the 23 floats that participated in Sun-

day's parade would be less commercialized.

"This time, we did away with [blatant] product endorsements," he said.

The floats' designs stuck to the festival slogan "Balik Bulaklak" and bore nature themes (forests, flowers, birds, marine life, Cordillera village). They used fresh chrysanthemums, Malaysian mums, roses, lilies, daisies, everlasting and bromeliads. At least two floats wove fresh strawberries into their design.

Organizers said one of the floats cost at least P250,000 while a fast food chain spent an amount "equivalent to a new car" on its float.

Reports from Vincent Cabreza, Desiree Caluza, Frank Cimatu, Aprille Joy Fernandez, Jiezl Reotutar and Benjie Fernandez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Ver son's nanny can stay in US

SHE BECAME an accidental exile to the United States following the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution which toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

Six years later, Teresita Patingo Huppanda, a nanny who ended up in the Marcos entourage that fled the country to the US during the bloodless coup, began fending off attempts to deport her by US authorities.

In 1992, the US issued a deportation order against her but she has since been challenging the order. Her legal battle even landed her in the news in the US after her case caught the interest of the American media.

Cashier

Now a Wal-Mart store cashier in Sacramento, California, the 56-year-old "Tess" scored a victory last week when a San Francisco court approved stipulations to have her case dismissed.

Huppanda's lawyer James Mayock hailed as a "just resolution" the ruling handed down by Federal District Court Judge William Alsup on Feb. 24. "The (US) government recognizes that no legitimate ends are served by continuing to try to deport her," Mayock said in a press statement.

"I am thrilled to be able to stay," said Huppanda upon learning of the court's decision from her lawyer.

The court order came on the eve of the 19th anniversary of the EDSA uprising which climaxed in the hasty departure of the Marcoses and their cronies who were airlifted from Manila to Hawaii on US military aircraft.

6th week

Huppanda was not even employed in the dictator's household then, but ended up joining the airlift as *yaya* (nanny) to the newborn son of Col. Irwin Ver, then head of the Presidential Security Command.

She was only on her sixth week of working for the colonel, a son of Marcos' top military aide, Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Fabian Ver, when her US "exile" began. *Volt Contreras*

NOW BE REWARDED WHEN YOU HELP BUILD THE SHRINE OF ST. THERESE OF THE CHILD JESUS

Clients of Magnificat Ventures Corporation who are helping build the Shrine of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus by purchasing Columbarium Vaults have another thing going for them other than their devotional generosity to the saint. All previous buyers and owners with current accounts as well as potential Columbarium Vault buyers are entitled to join the raffle promo where they can win a Honda Jazz 2005 Model in the Grand Draw.

This worthwhile promotional activity, while aimed at generating incremental sales for the columbarium vaults of the Shrine, is first and foremost, a move to bring into completion the Shrine of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus. The ecclesiastical place is envisioned to be the center of devotion to the saint in Asia and is slated to open by the first quarter of 2006.

Starting March 1, 2005, good hearted individuals who are current clients and vault owners and new columbarium vault buyers will be entitled to raffle tickets every time they buy a columbarium vault in cash or pay their monthly amortization (via cash or through Credit Card). Every Php 1,000.00 equals One (1) raffle ticket that will give vault owners the chance to win consolation or grand prizes in the Pre-Draw and/or Grand Draw. There is no limit to the number of prizes you can win for both draws.

If you are in search of an ideal and perfect depository for interring the ashes or bones of departed loved ones, now is the best time to do so. The Pre-Draw will be on October 1, 2005 - Feast Day of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus while the Grand Draw will be on January 2, 2006 - the Birth Date of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus. Read posters, flyers and print ads for more details.

All interested and concerned individuals who want to help build the Shrine can call Magnificat Ventures Corporation at tel. nos. 635-4680, 635-4527, and 636-6279; fax no. 687-1477; site tel. no. 853-9187; mobile no. (0917) 890-4342; with address at 22nd Floor, Galleria Corporate Center, EDSA cor. Ortigas Avenue, Q.C. 1100. Or visit the shrine's website at sttheresseshrine.com.

JAZZ A VAULT AWAY HELP BUILD THE SHRINE

Help build the Shrine of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and get a chance to win a Honda Jazz 2005 model in the Grand Draw

WHO CAN JOIN?

1. NEW INDIVIDUAL COLUMBARIUM VAULT BUYERS must conform to the following qualifications:
 - Filipino Citizens or Resident Foreigners (Aliens) in the Philippines
 - Must be of legal age
 - Residents of Mega Metro Manila and Luzon.
2. For NEW CORPORATE ACCOUNTS, the Duly Registered Company Name will be the entity entitled to join this Sales Promotion. The Company will be required to appoint an Official Representative as Signatory to the Sales Promo. In the event the Company/Corporate Account wins a prize/s, the prize will go to the Company/Corporate Account and not to the Official Representative.
3. ALL CURRENT & DULY REGISTERED CLIENTS (either Individual or Corporate) in GOOD CREDIT STANDING with Magnificat Ventures Corporation for the Shrine of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus Columbarium Vaults are qualified to join in the Sales Promotion as a Sales Incentive. They must maintain their GOOD CREDIT STANDING of their accounts starting March 01, 2005 until January 02, 2006 to qualify for this Sales Incentive.
4. For CURRENT CORPORATE ACCOUNTS, the Duly Registered Company Name will be the entity entitled to join the sales incentive program. The company will be required to appoint an Official Representative as Signatory in the Raffle Ticket. In the event the Company/Corporate Account wins a prize/s, the prize will go to the Company and not to the Official Representative.

HOW TO JOIN:

1. For all Columbarium Vault Purchases, either Outright Cash, Monthly Cash Amortization or through Credit Card, the individual or company will be entitled to ONE (1) Raffle Ticket for every ONE THOUSAND PESOS (Php 1,000.00) worth of payment/s.
2. The following guidelines will be followed when claiming Raffle Tickets:
 - For Monthly Cash Amortization - the individual may claim the equivalent number of Raffle Ticket/s every time payment is made and based on the Monthly Cash Amortization Amount as stated in their Receipts.
 - All Columbarium Vault Buyers whose payment terms are monthly amortized (either Cash or Credit Card) is given the option to defer their Raffle Ticket Claims and accumulate their proofs of payments. This is to maximize the equivalent number of Raffle Tickets during the promo period provided they claim their Raffle Tickets on or before the Deadlines for each Raffle Draw.
3. RAFFLE TICKETS can only be claimed upon payment at Magnificat Ventures Corporation Office located at the 22nd floor, Galleria Corporate Center, EDSA corner Ortigas Avenue, Quezon City.
4. COLUMBARIUM VAULT BUYERS are entitled to ADDITIONAL RAFFLE TICKETS depending on the following Columbarium Vault Classifications and Terms of Payment:
 - Vault Purchase at La Chapelle des Roses or La Vie du San Thérèse:
 - Outright Cash Purchase - Additional 10 Raffle Tickets
 - Deferred Payment with 20% Down Payment - Additional 5 Raffle Tickets
 - Deferred Payment with 12 Post Dated Checks (PDC's) - Additional 1 Raffle Ticket
 - Vault Purchase at Lisieux:
 - Outright Cash Purchase - Additional 6 Raffle Tickets
 - Deferred Payment with 20% Down Payment - Additional 2 Raffle Tickets
 - Deferred Payment with 12 Post Dated Checks (PDC's) - Additional 1 Raffle Ticket
 - Vault Purchase at Alençon or Carmel:
 - Outright Cash Purchase - Additional 4 Raffle Tickets
 - Deferred Payment with 20% Down Payment - Additional 2 Raffle Tickets
 - Deferred Payment with 12 Post Dated Checks (PDC's) - Additional 1 Raffle Ticket
5. Participants of the "JAZZ A VAULT AWAY HELP BUILD A SHRINE" PROMO of Shrine of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus must write and fill up the following data in the Raffle Ticket:
 - Complete Name of Individual/Company
 - Age
 - Complete Address
 - Contact Number (cell phone and landline, where applicable)
 - (Must affix) Signature
 - Name of Sales Agent
6. Raffle Stub Entries with INCOMPLETE BASIC DATA (i.e. Name, Age, Address, Contact Number/s, where applicable and Signature) are automatically disqualified.
7. Drop the Raffle Stub Portion of the Raffle Ticket in designated drop boxes and keep the other half of the raffle ticket as proof of participation in the event you win a prize.
8. Drop Boxes are located at the following venues:
 - MAGNIFICAT VENTURES CORPORATION OFFICE - 22nd floor Galleria Corporate Center Building, EDSA corner Ortigas Avenue, Quezon City
 - SHRINE OF ST. THERESE OF THE CHILD JESUS (Project Site Sales Office) - Marikina St., Villamor Airbase, Pasay City

9. Deadline for Raffle Entries are the following:

- SEPTEMBER 28, 2005 before 5:00 PM for the PRE-DRAW on October 01, 2005
- DECEMBER 29, 2005 before 5:00 PM for the GRAND DRAW on January 02, 2006
- 10. All participants to this sales promotion must maintain GOOD CREDIT STANDING at the time of the Draws. Delinquent clients during the PRE-DRAW and GRAND DRAW are automatically disqualified.
- 11. Promo Period is from MARCH 01, 2005 to DECEMBER 29, 2005
- 12. The following are the Prizes to be raffled off during the PRE-DRAW and GRAND DRAW.

PRE-DRAW PRIZES

- 1st Prize - 1 unit Samsung 53.34 centimeters (21 inch) Flat Screen TV
- 2nd Prize - 1 unit Panasonic Microwave Oven
- 3rd Prize - 1 unit Nokia 2600 cellular phone

Consolation Prizes:

- 10 units PROMAC DVD Players
- 10 units Imarflex Oven Toasters
- 10 units PROMAC Stand Fans

GRAND DRAW PRIZES

- Grand Prize - Honda Jazz, 2005 Model
- 1st Prize - 1 unit Panasonic 73.66 centimeters (29 inch) Flat Screen TV with TV Rack
- 2nd Prize - 1 unit Personal Computer (Pentium IV)
- 3rd Prize - 1 unit Samsung SCD 103 Digital Handycam
- 4th Prize - 1 unit Pioneer Home Theater
- 5th Prize - 1 unit Nokia 6170 cellular phone
- 6th Prize - 1 unit Pioneer 5 DVD Disc Changer Component
- 7th Prize - 1 unit Panasonic 27 cubic meters (9 cubic ft.) Refrigerator
- 8th Prize - 1 unit Canon Power Shot A310 Digital Camera
- 9th Prize - 1 unit Black Magic Mike (3 chips)
- 10th Prize - 1 unit Samsung DVD Player with Karaoke Function

Consolation Prizes:

- 10 units PROMAC DVD Players
- 10 units Imarflex Turbo Broilers
- 10 units Imarflex Oven Toasters
- 10 units PROMAC Stand Fans

13. All Prizes are TAX FREE.

14. The Raffle Draws will be held at the project site: Shrine of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Marikina St., Villamor Airbase, Pasay City on OCTOBER 01, 2005 at 2:00 PM for the PRE-DRAW and on JANUARY 02, 2006 at 2:00 PM for the GRAND DRAW.

15. The PRE-DRAW and GRAND DRAW will be conducted by the Key Officers of Magnificat Ventures Corporation together with the Advertising Agency (CORPLAN, Inc.) Representative and witnessed by the DTI Representative.

16. All Winners of the PRE-DRAW and GRAND DRAW will be Officially Notified by Registered Mail within 10 days after each Raffle Draw.

17. Names of all Raffle Draw Winners will be published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer on October 8, 2005 for the PRE-DRAW and on January 8, 2006 for the GRAND DRAW.

18. All Non-Winning Raffle Stub Entries during the PRE-DRAW will automatically be carried-over to the GRAND DRAW.

19. All prizes are not convertible to cash.

20. There is No Limit as to the number of prizes a participant can win in each Raffle Draw.

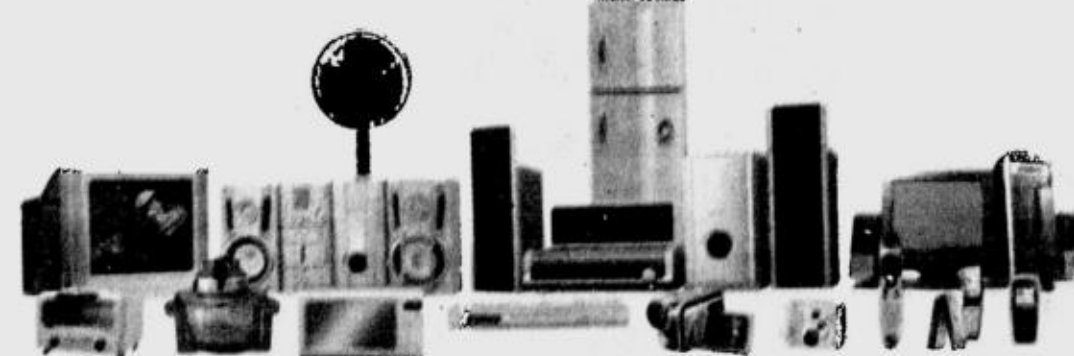
21. Prizes may be claimed at the Project Site Sales Office - Shrine of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Marikina St., Villamor Airbase, Pasay City between 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on the date indicated in the Registered Mail - (the OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION TO WINNERS).

22. When claiming prizes, all Winners are required to present Two (2) Valid IDs (e.g. Company ID, SSS, GSIS, Driver's License, Passport, the other half of the Raffle Ticket and their OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION (Registered Mail or Telegram) as proof of their claim.

23. If a Winner fails to present the other half of the Raffle Ticket or the Official Notification or both, the Winner must be cleared and certified by the Key Officers or Officer in-Charge of the Sales Promotion of Magnificat Ventures Corporation prior to awarding of the prize/s being claimed.

24. Unclaimed prizes after 60 days from receipt of the OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION TO WINNERS will be automatically forfeited with prior approval from DTI-NCR.

25. All Officers, Employees, Sales Force, Affiliated Sales Agents or Companies and the Advertising Agency (Corplan, Inc.) of Magnificat Ventures Corporation up to the 2nd Degree of Consanguinity or Affinity are disqualified from joining this sales promotion.



*Colors may vary from actual prizes

PROMO PERIOD IS FROM MARCH 1, 2005 TO DECEMBER 29, 2005.

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Shrine of
St. Thérèse
of the Child Jesus
A Comfort from Life's Thorns
HLURB No. 10435

Longer hospital stay for Pontiff expected

From page A1

let's say a month, the tube can be completely removed, as long as the Pope does not need respiratory assistance. In general, patients start to speak spontaneously in a couple of days, but he may need more time," the doctor said.

Prof. Marco Ranieri of Molinette Hospital, the largest in the northern Piedmont region, told La Stampa that the tube could stay in place indefinitely.

"If the Parkinson's gets so serious that it compromises the ability to recover the airways, the tube may be left in permanently," he told the daily La Stampa.

Remain as head of Church

In Sydney, Cardinal George Pell, head of the Catholic Church in Australia, yesterday said Pope John Paul II should remain as head of the Church as long as he could communicate, despite being "gravely sick."

Pell, the Catholic archbishop of Sydney, said the Pontiff should continue to lead the Church even if he could only communicate by writing.

"The Pope has said he is not going to retire, I accept that," said Pell, who is one of the cardinal electors who will choose a new pope.

However, he said that if the Pope's health deteriorated badly, then other options may need to be considered.

Pope gives blessing from hospital window

ROME—Pope John Paul II appeared briefly from his hospital window on Sunday, blessing people gathered below and at one point reaching to his throat which was operated on last week.

Looking stiff and awkward, the Pope also waved twice from the 10th floor window of the Gemelli Polyclinic before aides wheeled his chair away. He appeared for about 2 minutes.

The 84-year-old Pope is recovering from surgery last Thursday aimed at easing his breathing problems.

He had asked the faithful to pray for him, in a statement read

by a top Vatican official on the steps of St. Peter's Basilica, as he missed leading weekly prayers for the first time in his 26-year pontificate.

"I ask you to continue to accompany me, above all with your prayers," the Pope said in the statement read by the Vatican's undersecretary of state.

"Dear brothers and sisters, once again I address you from the Agostino Gemelli Polyclinic," the Pope said in the prepared remarks.

"I thank you with affection and feel you all spiritually near. I think of you gathered in St. Peter's Square, alone and in groups that

have come, and to all those from every part of the world who are interested in me."

The Pope said the pre-Easter period of Lent "helps us to better understand the value of suffering that, in one way or another, touches us all."

"And looking at Christ and following him with patient trust, we succeed in understanding that every human form of pain contains in itself a divine promise of salvation and joy," he said.

"I would like that this message of comfort and hope reaches everyone, especially those going through difficult moments, and who suffers in body and spirit."

The Pope's personal photographer arrived at Gemelli on Sunday morning, but there was no word from the Holy See on whether it intended to photograph the Holy Father or make a photo available to the media to reassure the faithful that he was recovering.

The statement and midday prayer was read by Vatican undersecretary of state Archbishop Leonardo Sandri, who delivered a blessing to the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square.

"The Holy Father is not with us, but he is following us from Gemelli," Sandri said. *Reuters and AP*

"If the Pope would completely lose his faculties, and that looked as though that might go on for quite a while, then we've got a new situation," Pell told the news agency Australian Associated Press after Sunday Mass.

Closed conclave

Pell, who will fly to Rome today on a prescheduled trip, is one of the 120 cardinal electors from around the world required to attend the closed conclave, which meets in Rome's Sistine Chapel to elect popes under the strict proto-

col set out in the Church document, *Universi Dominici Gregis*.

He said the trip had nothing to do with the Pope's health, adding: "I'm off to Rome tomorrow for a couple of meetings this week and a meeting next week."

"I'll be back today fortnight if nothing spectacular happens in the next week."

Since the Pontiff's surgery, the Vatican has been at pains to assure people that he is recovering and churchmen, including Pell, say he is still in charge.

Pell requested churchgoers to

pray for the Pontiff. "He's gravely sick, he's been very sick for quite some time. He's obviously deteriorated further," Pell said.

Holy Hour

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio B. Rosales also asked all Filipinos to join Catholics the world over in praying for the fast recovery of Pope John Paul II.

Rosales, head of the largest and most influential archdiocese in the Philippines, instructed schools, religious chapels and parishes in Manila to set aside a

Holy Hour on March 4, the first Friday of the month to pray for the Pope.

In a circular issued Feb. 26, Rosales said prayers, reflections on the Holy Rosary, Masses and the adoration of the Eucharist should be offered as part of the country's contribution to the worldwide prayer for the Pontiff.

"At this peculiar need of the Holy Father, may we be together in the spirit of prayer for his recovery and health," the Manila archbishop said.

About 80 percent of the Philip-

pinos' 82 million population are Roman Catholics, making it Asia's only predominantly Christian country. The Pope visited the country twice, the latest in 1995.

Rosales issued the circular from Rome, where he is attending a meeting of one of the pontifical councils. He said a request for prayers for the Pope's well-being was issued by archbishops all over the world.

"Here in Rome even a part of our sessions in a meeting was spent in prayer for the quick recovery of the Pope's health. The same request for prayers is repeated the world over," he said.

Circular No. 2005-06 was immediately released to the clergy, religious women, heads of lay organizations, lay associations, transparochial communities, heads of ministries and parish councils and youth leaders.

Rosales, who will arrive tomorrow night, will lead the prayers of the Rosary and the offering of the Eucharist on Friday at the Chapel of San Carlos Seminary in Makati City at 5:30 p.m.

In Cebu City, Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Vidal urged the faithful to pray for the immediate recovery of the Pope.

"Whatever the Lord wills for him, if He wants him to live, maybe he would be able to gain strength," Vidal told reporters.

Reports from AFP, Blanche S. Rivera in Manila and Jolene R. Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau

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 - Two letters of recommendation from a former professor or dean
 - Police Clearance
- Applicants must have taken the National Medical Admission Test (NMAT) before June 2005.
- Applicants must pay the application fee and secure an application form from the Dean's Office.
- Applicants must pass an Interview session given by the Admissions Committee.
- Applicants must obtain their Baccalaureate degree by the end of the second semester preceding admission to medical school. Those who will graduate after the summer session preceding admission to medical school will be considered on a case to case basis.
- Applicants should have no criminal conviction current or past.
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Application forms may be obtained at:
Office of the Dean, College of Medicine
Tel. no.: 7356011 loc. 4116/4520
Cellular: 0927-8193936
Email: sanbedacolmed@yahoo.com
Deadline: April 29, 2005.

"That in all things God may be glorified."

Rosales bags 2nd LPGA ...

From page A1

her victory and wish her the best of luck in all golf tournaments."

Wie, a Korean-American, carded her third consecutive 70 but still came up two shots shy of Rosales at the Turtle Bay Resort Golf Club.

Rosales entered Saturday's final round with a two-stroke advantage and finished two shots clear of Wie and Cristie Kerr.

Repulsing challengers

She left the door slightly open with two bogeys and seven pars on the back nine but battled hard down the stretch.

The Filipino sensation held off her competitors and controlled the pin-bending, hat-grabbing tradewinds that gusted up to 48 kph.

"It feels good. It feels really good because at the end of the year I was really close, the Open, the Tour Championship. It just kills me every time I give it away," Rosales said.

'Don't panic'

"I wanted to take it one shot at a time, don't panic and that is what I did today."

Rosales had five top-10 finishes last year, including her first LPGA victory at last year's Chick-fil-A Charity Championship.

Rosales started the day with a two-stroke cushion over Reilley Rankin and kept the pressure on the pursuers by birdieing two of her first six holes to reach 11-under.

Jenny stumbles

She stumbled when her second shot got caught in the wind and fell short of the green, plopping into the water on the par-4 seventh. She carded a double bogey on that hole and later bogeyed Nos. 13 and 15, leaving an opening for her opponents.

But no one was able to take advantage. Rosales had a two-stroke lead over Kerr with two strokes left and could've sealed the win on No. 17, but missed her 12-foot birdie putt.

She birdied the 511-yard ninth to make the turn at 35.

The pursuers

Playing in the first of her six sponsor's exemption events on the LPGA Tour this year, the 15-year-old Wie was undone by her worst start of the tournament.

She shot a one-over 37 on the front—her worst effort by three shots—but she climbed back into contention with three birdies and a 33 on her final nine.

Kerr fired an even-par 72 to tie Wie for second. Rankin shot a 75 and finished fourth at four-under.

Only 13 golfers finished the tournament

under par and Wie's 70 tied five other golfers for the low round of the day.

Kerr had two birdies on the front side, including the par-3 No. 8 to get within a stroke of Rosales, and made the turn at 34. But she had a rocky back nine with four bogeys and two birdies.

Kerr had a breakout season last year with a career-best three wins and 11 top-10 finishes. She was fifth on the money list.

Heather Bowie closed with a 70 and tied for fifth at 213 with Nicole Perrot (72) and Hee-Won Han (73).

The inaugural SBS Open marked the return of the LPGA Tour to Wie's home state. The last LPGA event in Hawaii was the 2002 Takefuji Classic, where Wie became the youngest to qualify for an LPGA event at age 12.

Best finish

Wie was the only player to shoot under par in all three rounds.

"This is the best finish I have had and it feels great to have it in my home state," Wie said. "I think my game got a lot more consistent. I shot what I wanted to, consistently under par."

"I just have to work on eliminating those stupid mistakes and making a lot more birdies."

Wie started the day five strokes behind Rosales.

Only amateur

The hometown favorite and only amateur in the event, Wie had trouble with her irons early but rattled in a 30-foot birdie putt on the par-3 eighth to make the turn at 37.

She moved up the leaderboard to reach 5-under with birdies on Nos. 11 and 12 and tapped in for another on her 54th hole.

The final scores: Jennifer Rosales, \$150,000, 66-69-73—208; a-Michelle Wie 70-70-70—210; Cristie Kerr, \$91,544, 70-68-72—210; Reilley Rankin, \$66,409, 71-66-75—212; Heather Bowie, \$46,361, 68-75-70—213; Hee-Won Han, \$46,361, 70-70-73—213; Catriona Matthew, \$24,726, 75-69-70—214; Gloria Park, \$24,726, 73-69-72—214; Tina Barrett, \$24,726, 72-70-72—214; Carin Koch, \$24,726, 70-72-72—214; Nicole Perrot, \$24,726, 72-69-73—214; Rosie Jones, \$24,726; 70-69-75—214; Sung Ah Yim, \$17,542, 68-75-72—215; Dorothy Delasin, \$14,635, 71-75-70—216; Leta Lindley, \$14,635, 72-72-72—216; Pat Hurst, \$14,635, 70-73-73—216; Angela Stanford, \$14,635, 68-74-74—216; Lorena Ochoa, \$14,635, 68-72-76—216. *Reports from AFP, AP and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

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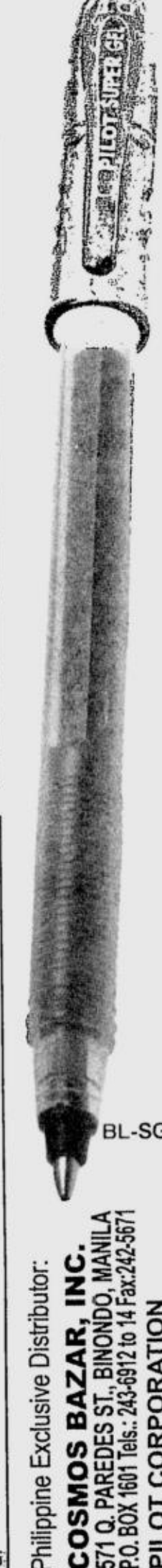
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Queen: Charles putting 'gratification' before duty

LONDON—Queen Elizabeth II has distanced herself from the wedding of Prince Charles because she believes her son is putting "personal gratification before duty," a newspaper reported Sunday.

Royal courtiers, quoted by The Sunday Telegraph, also said privately that the queen

is "lukewarm" about the marriage and worried it could tarnish the monarchy itself.

It was announced last Tuesday that the queen and her husband Prince Philip would miss her son's April 8 civil marriage ceremony with Camilla Parker Bowles at Windsor town hall in deference to their wishes for a "low-key" event.

However, royal watchers in the British media called her planned absence a monumental snub even though the queen and other family members planned to attend the service of dedication afterward at St. George's Chapel in Windsor.

The courtiers told the newspaper that Prince Charles' private office had been outmaneuvered by Buckingham Palace, the queen's official residence in London.

The queen's private secretary

Sir Robin Janvrin had tried to protect her from becoming involved in a "town hall marriage," which demeaned her own status, a courtier was quoted as saying.

The courtier said Janvrin's intervention was symptomatic of the queen's persistent concerns over Charles' relationship with Parker Bowles.

"The queen believes that the Prince of Wales has put his own gratification and interests before duty by pursuing his relationship with Camilla and she can never forgive that," the courtier was quoted as saying.

Prince Charles and Parker Bowles, who have been seeing each other off and on for 30 years, finally announced on Feb. 10 that they would marry on April 8 at a civil wedding in Windsor.



STRESSSED OUT

Japan's career woman turned royal, Crown Princess Masako, shown here in a December 1998 photo, has dashed hopes she has recovered from over a year of illness by canceling her first reappearance outside Tokyo. She remains under stress to have a son and be a role model, it was reported Feb. 27.

Half-brother of Saddam captured

BAGHDAD—Saddam Hussein's half-brother has been captured, Iraq's government said on Sunday, the first senior Baath Party member to be detained in a year.

Sabawi Ibrahim al-Hasan al-Tikriti, an intelligence chief and one-time adviser to the former leader, was No. 36 on the US military's list of the 55 most-wanted people in Iraq.

Several months ago Iraqi government officials said Ibrahim was one of at least two former Baath Party members directing the anti-American insurgency from neighboring Syria.

In a statement confirming Sabawi's capture, the interim government said it would seize "all criminals who committed massacres and those who have their hands stained with the blood of the Iraqi people," and deliver them to justice.

Ibrahim, who had a \$1-million bounty on his head, is the first person on the list to be detained since February 2004, when No. 41, Muhammad Zimam al-Sadun, was taken into custody.

Nearly a dozen of the 55 remain at large, including Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, one of Saddam's top aides, who is No. six.

Details of the arrest and its circumstances were expected to be announced at a news conference later on Sunday.

Ibrahim's brothers Watban and Barzan—Nos. 37 and 38 in a US pack of cards—were seized in April 2003 and are being held at a US military facility on the outskirts of Baghdad.

They are due to be tried in the coming months, part of a group of 12, including Saddam, who will be the first people to go before the country's special tribunal.

Reuters

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Huge fund needed for bird flu

HO CHI MINH CITY—Global health experts say several hundred million dollars is required to fight bird flu, and warn the disease could lead to a pandemic, but donors are slow in coming forward to pick up the tab.

"It's not easy, the donor countries are not the affected countries," Dr. Abdul Baqi from Bangladesh's Central Disease Investigation Laboratory told AFP after attending a bird flu conference in Ho Chi Minh City last week.

But the Asian regional director of the World Health Organization (WHO), Shigeru Omi, warned at the conference that there was the "gravest possible danger" of a pandemic.

The bird flu virus which emerged in late 2003 has so far killed a total of 45 people in Vietnam and Thailand.

Many millions of chickens and other poultry have been slaughtered in an at-

tempt to contain the virus.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) says more than \$100 million is needed to urgently strengthen animal health services and laboratories to improve virus detection and ultimately eradicate the disease.

In addition, several hundred million dollars is needed to finance the restocking of infected poultry flocks and to restructure the whole sector, it says.

Experts also want chickens and ducks to be segregated from other farm animals such as pigs.

Only \$18 million has been committed to the tasks so far, according to the FAO.

"Compared to the tsunami, the donor countries will see how much business will be affected, so I think it (funding) will take time," Baqi said after the Ho Chi Minh conference ended Friday. AFP

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Iran, Russia sign landmark nuclear fuel agreement

TEHRAN—Iran and Russia on Sunday signed a landmark nuclear fuel accord that paves the way for the firing up of the Islamic republic's first atomic power station, a project the United States alleges is a cover for weapons development.

Iranian media said Russia's top atomic energy official Alexander Rumyantsev and his Iranian counterpart Gholamreza Aghazadeh inked the deal during a tour of the Russian-built power plant at Bushehr in southern Iran.

Under the fuel agreement—which would cap an \$800-million contract to build and bring the plant on line—Russia will provide the fuel and fire up the reactor on the condition that Iran sends back spent fuel, which potentially could be reprocessed and upgraded to weapons use.

The United States, convinced that Iran is using an atomic energy drive as a front for a secret bomb program, has been trying to convince Russia to halt its nuclear cooperation with Iran.

The condition that spent fuel be returned was built into the deal as a concession to widespread international concerns over Iran's ambitions. Iran initially rejected the condition, but eventually relented after two years of negotiations.

The dispute over the fate of spent fuel had pushed the plant's opening back to January 2006, and the deal faced a further snag Saturday when Iran objected to a Russian proposal to further delay firing up the plant's reactor.

According to Russia's ITAR-TASS news agency, the plant is now scheduled to go online at the end of 2006.

"We foresee physical startup at the end of 2006, with the fuel to be delivered around half a year before that," Rumyantsev quoted as saying.

"We signed a confidential protocol setting out the schedule for delivery of fuel to the nuclear power station at Bushehr," he said, saying the quantity of fuel involved was around 100 tons.

AFP

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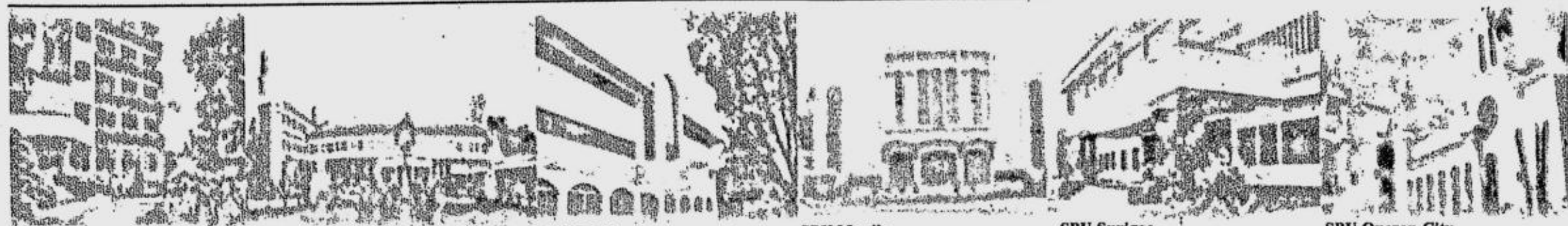
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SPUS, the Philippines' First and Only CHED-Recognized University System, Now on Its Second Year

The St. Paul University System (SPUS) is celebrating its second year as the first and only University System recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Having a well-established and globally competitive educational standard, the SPUS was accorded the prestigious award last March 10, 2004 at the James B. Reuter, S.J. Theater at St. Paul University in Quezon City.



It was a momentous affair graced by the presence of key personalities in the field of education, like Dr. Ma. Cristina Padollina, CHED Commissioner; Dr. Nilo Rosas, chairman of the CHED-St. Paul University Evaluation Committee; and Rev. Fr. James B. Reuter, SJ, a renowned religious educator. Present to receive the award were Sister Mary Magdalen Torres, SPC, former Provincial Superior, and the presidents of the six component schools within the St. Paul University System.

Together, We Are Better. Working as a system, all SPUS campuses from Northern, Central, and Southern Philippines now move in greater synergy toward the fulfillment of its vision and mission. As a result, every student in the St. Paul campuses of Dumaguete, Manila, Quezon City, Tuguegarao, Iloilo, and Surigao benefits from the following system advantages: (1) assured delivery of quality education focused on Paulinian core values, (2) promotion of excellence through collaboration and integration rather than competition and individualism among students, (3) constant reviewing, aligning, enriching strategic plans and developing new curricula to ensure relevance and pertinence of programs in realizing quality education, (4) synergy in school operations and facility improvement, and (5) easy student transfer and accreditation of units.



Brighter, Higher, Stronger. Always striving for excellence, the St. Paul University System does not rest on its laurels. It continuously innovates and challenges its own ways of teaching in the quest for integrated and holistic education. The fruit of such consistent improvement efforts earned recognition of some of the SPUS' component universities by the International Standardization Organization (ISO) 9001-2000. ISO certification proves that these institutions are at par with an internationally recognized set of requirements. Other component universities are deliberately moving towards the Philippine Quality Awards. A Memorandum of Agreement signed between the SPUS and selected schools in the People's Republic of China for joint undertakings in nursing education further the competitive edge of the SPUS in global standards.

Our Gift to the Filipino Youth. From its seed as a simple catechism class for little children until its full bloom as a university system, love for the youth has always been the prime motivation among the Sisters and the entire SPUS staff in pursuing their ministry in education.

The passion of the Sisters for charity, social responsibility, and sense of humanity has propelled Paulinian education and spirit through emphasis on the Paulinian values of Christocentricity, communion, community, charity and charism as the solid foundation of a distinctly Paulinian Education.

Dedication to Quality Education. As early as 1974, the St. Paul Education Apostolate in the Philippines had its sights on unification through a Vision-Mission that would lead to the alignment of its different schools.

Several years later, detailed plans signaled the birth of a new concept of aligning human capital and support resources to realize the fulfillment of a more relevant

and assertive education. The idea for the St. Paul University System quickly gained direction and momentum from these early efforts.



The St. Paul University System is a network of Paulinian educational institutions bound by its commitment to form Christ-centered, integrated, and competent persons in the service of the church and society.

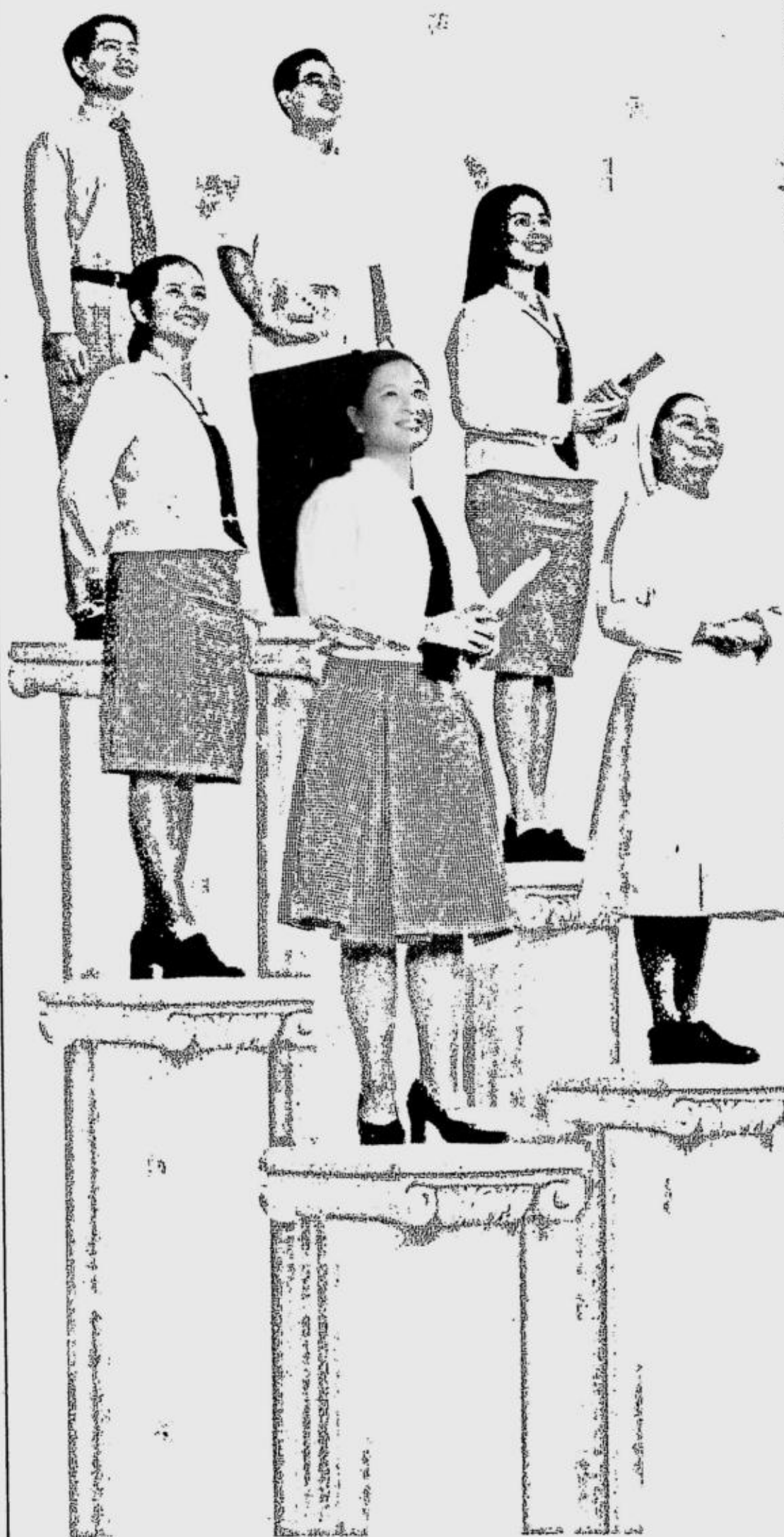
Through collaboration, complementation and resource-sharing, the system ensures the delivery of quality programs and services by its members, thus affirming its leadership role in education for social transformation.

Today, the St. Paul University System continues with the Paulinian tradition of molding an individual through excellence in education and preparing its graduates

to meet the demanding challenges of today's corporate and professional areas. The system's roots are in its history and traditions. Its future lies in forging new

paths and trailblazing in educational endeavors that will continue to honor the Paulinian and the Church and society he/she serves.

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Witness

THE POPE'S emergency tracheotomy last Thursday has raised, for the second time in a month, the one question that never fails to exercise news organizations around the world: Who runs the Church when the Pope is ill?

The question, however, proceeds from the wrong assumption. The Pope is not the chief operating officer of a complex multinational; he is the chief priest of a Church that is 2,000 years old. In other words, he leads a religion that counts time by centuries.

In the event that he is incapacitated, the Church will continue to do what it has always done: gather the faithful, preach the Christian revelation, minister to the needy, offer a sacrifice of the "joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties" of an imperfect and all-too-small world.

To be sure, running the Vatican is not the same as running the Roman Catholic Church. The Vatican is a city-state with outside influence in global organizations and international forums; when news organizations consider the whole issue of schedules and deadlines, this is often what they mean. Who will run the Vatican?

The quick answer is: The same people who do now. The Secretary of State serves as the chief official, but the various congregations follow the lead of their respective prefects. There may be infighting, or at the very least some maneuvering, between influential cardinals and archbishops when the Pope becomes incapacitated, but patience is a virtue in large bureaucracies, especially that of the Vatican.

But if the Pope is incapacitated, who will "run" the Roman Catholic Church?

This question is erroneous, like the first, but it reflects a more important error. Indeed, it is a measure of Pope John Paul II's overwhelming success in redefining the papacy. For almost every Catholic, the "Church" was very much a local experience. Catholicism was the parish, the neighborhood Catholic school, the patron saint, the local feast. Before the great John XXIII threw the windows of the Vatican wide open in the 1960s, the Pope was a remote figure—an often sainted link to the past, but always remote. But if John XXIII traveled around Rome and Paul VI journeyed to other countries, John Paul II was the Pope who brought the Church into the modern, media-oriented age. He became anything but remote.

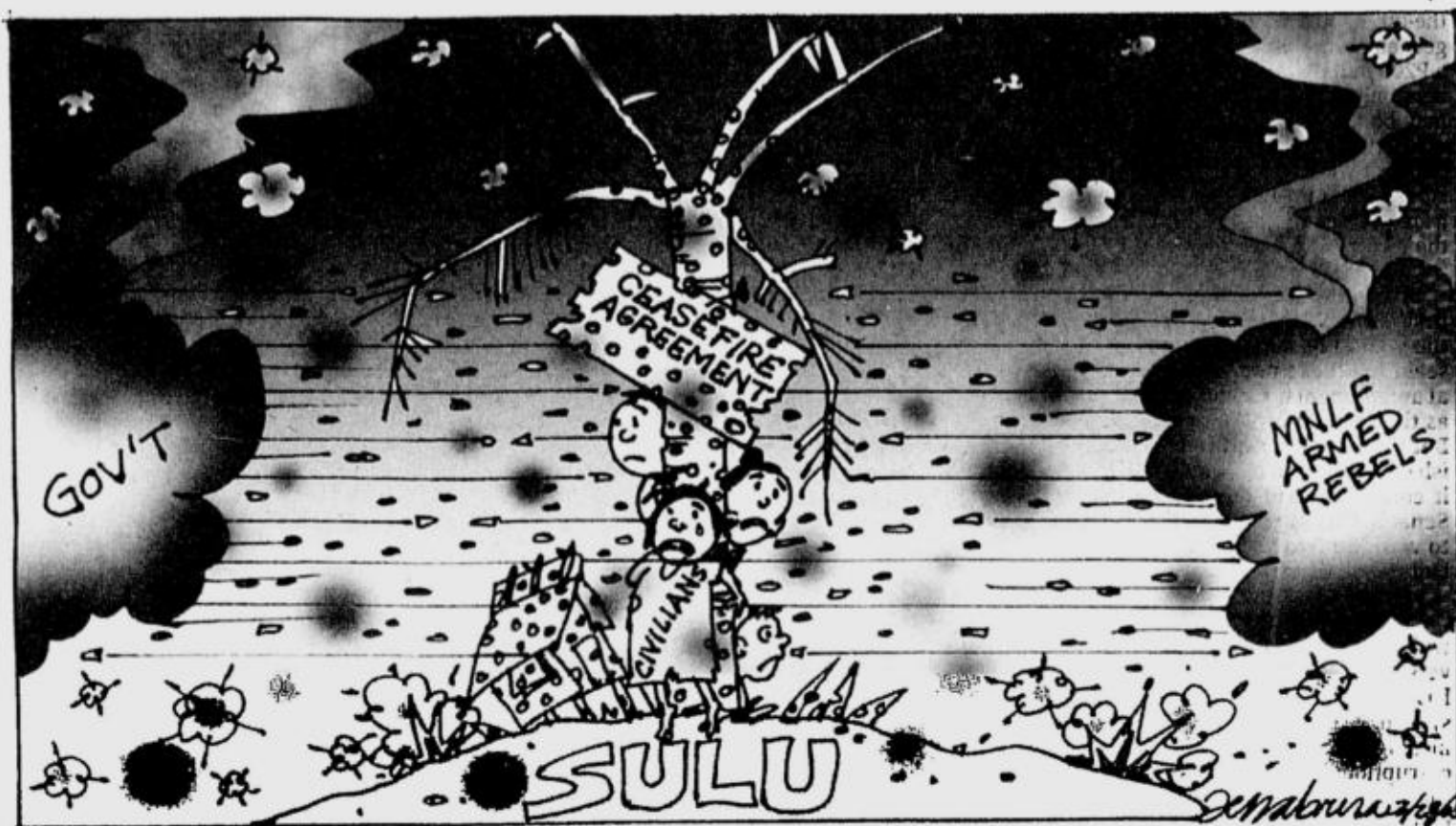
He may be the most traveled man in history, logging more than a hundred papal visits to countries great and small. He has also been very much an activist pope, the political liberal who helped overturn communism in Europe, the religious conservative who preached the gospel of life at every turn (and canonized more saints than any pope before him).

It may well be that the "Catechism of the Catholic Church," the first new summation of the Catholic faith in 400 years, will be remembered as his chief legacy. It is certainly characteristic of his reign: formidably intellectual, in many ways an invigorating departure from old ways of doing things, but by design and in effect a bold attempt to provide the Catholic faithful with the old, pre-Vatican II certainties.

The question of who will "run" the Church when he is seriously ill, therefore, is a product of the vital dynamism he brought to the center of Catholic life. But it is in error because, in the Catholic tradition, no human agent is alone responsible for the growth of the Church, or its decay.

The real question that should be asked again and again, in newspapers and on television, online and over radio, does not involve a political issue at all. It is not about the use of power, but the exercise of will. Why, we should ask again and again, does the Pope not resign? While the Vatican has not officially admitted it, it is well-known that John Paul II suffers from Parkinson's, a debilitating disease that turns even the ordinary act of breathing into a laborious, touch-and-go affair. (Hence, the need for a tracheotomy.)

Wouldn't the Church he has done so much to breathe new life into be better off if he stepped aside, to give way to a healthier successor, and to earn a well-deserved rest without the distractions of office? Perhaps not. Pope John Paul II has always been a teacher; now he is called to be even more—a witness, a co-sharer in the suffering that Christians believe is redemptive. By not resigning, he is only answering his vocation.



Preserve our forests for tourism

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz



The Philippine Wood Producers Association has presented a position paper to show why the ban should be lifted. In summary, it said:

1. That two million jobs in the wood producing and furniture industries, as well as P21 billion annually in the export of wood products, would be lost.
2. That we would have to import our annual requirements of 2 million to 2.5 million cubic meters of wood at a cost of \$500 million.
3. That local wood prices would rise because of the import substitutes.
4. That legal loggers are responsible and are practicing a "sustainable forest program."
5. That without the timber concessionaires guarding their concessions, illegal loggers would decimate the remaining forests.
6. That there is no guarantee that a logging ban would stop all logging.
7. That the government earns P840 million annually from the wood industry.
8. That logging was not responsible for the floods and landslides in Aurora and Quezon.

The loss of money and jobs is always a handy threat raised by industries adversely affected by government policies. True, some of those employed by the loggers will lose their jobs, but the alternative is for them and their neighbors to lose their lives when nature wreaks its revenge.

Our forests are our valuable natural resource—but they are there not to be cut but to be preserved for all to see. The world is rapidly running out of virgin forests, and tourists are looking for destinations that

still have plenty of untouched nature. The redwood forests of California are earning much more from tourism than the loggers could have ever earned had they cut down those trees. The Americans realized in time to save these giants before the loggers could finish them off.

In the US East Coast, the states are earning billions of dollars annually from crowds of tourists who arrive in autumn just to look at the colorful leaves of their trees. Had not their grandfathers planted many, many trees in those mountains years ago and preserved them, there would have been no foliage tours now.

Likewise, African nations are now earning much more from tourism—from their live wild animals—than they would have ever earned from hunters killing them.

Once an animal or tree is killed it is gone forever, the tourists go away. Keep them alive and the tourists would keep coming back to look at them.

If those whale sharks in Bicol had been killed, they would have brought food and money to the fishermen for a few days. But with them gone forever, so would the food and money. Alive, they attract tourists, again and again and bring jobs to the people who live there and protect them.

Similarly, if the coral reefs in our seas and the colorful creatures that live among them are harvested or destroyed, they'd bring some money to the people who harvest them. But once they're gone, they'd be gone for good. Nothing more. Preserve them; not only would the fishes keep coming back to breed among the reefs; so would the tourists—with plenty of money—to swim among these creatures and watch them.

Let's preserve our forests, and tourists will climb our mountains and explore our forests to look at trees and the animals living there. Tourists would not be flocking to Boracay, Bohol and the other tourist islands if the beaches there had been despoiled. They go there because they like the unspoiled nature of those beaches.

(To be continued)

Changes of the heart

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



I READ my favorite publisher's, Eggy Apostol's thoughts on Edsa, which appeared on our front pages last Thursday and Friday, and I couldn't agree with her more. There's been little change of heart after both Edsa I and II. Eggy herself suggests that the key to it could be the empowering force of education, particularly grassroots education.

I myself have written repeatedly about the power of education. Its importance has never been more patent than in these days when poverty grinds us down, and you wonder—as you cast your glance across your neighborhood—how the ragged crowd you see pushing pushcarts and shouting their wares would have done if they had gone through school. Indeed, education's value has never been more patent than in these days when technology is advancing by leaps and bounds across the world, particularly digital technology. You wonder how wide the knowledge gap would be between us and the rest of the world at the end of the day. Other Asian countries now have a one-to-one ratio between PC and student. The PC has barely made inroads in many parts of Metro Manila.

Education is empowering and truly the most miraculous thing in the world. The education of the *masa* especially. But while that is a goal worth pursuing with dogged, even single-minded, resolve, it helps to know exactly why both Edsas have not resulted in a change of heart, or head, and what needs to be done.

I remember again in this respect an editorial by Asiaweek a couple of months after Edsa I. It could not understand, it said, why some Edsa participants kept complaining that no real change was taking place, or being talked about at policymaking levels. When in fact a very real change had taken place in the country, it said, which was the air of freedom and decency and optimism the citizens now breathed. When the Filipino had recovered his pride and was no longer loath to proclaim himself as such to the world. Surely, the editorial said, that change was monumental? Surely, it said, that change was real?

I agreed with the sentiment wholeheartedly. I knew radical philosophy and had been bothered even then by its relegation of cultural, psychological and emotional factors to minor importance, regarding as of major importance only social, economic and political factors. But I also thought that while recognizing the sea change that had taken place in attitudes, there was need for a corresponding sea change in social structures. Without that sea change in social structures, I thought, there would be nothing to sustain the change in attitude.

Eggy herself recognizes that in her write-up. She quotes the late Ambassador Narciso Reyes' assessment of what happened: "The unstated goal of the People Power Revolution is not a mere change of regimes but rather a systemic change. This will entail not only a change of leaders but also—and more important—a change of heart of the new leadership. In this sense the People Power Revolution was a prelude rather than a complete fulfillment. The Real Revolution is yet to be."

We do not have to look very far to see where Cory failed to carry out a real revolution. It stares us in the face right now in the bloody strife in Hacienda Luisita. Land reform was the one thing Cory promised while she was fighting Marcos, the reform of Hacienda Luisita above all. It was a powerful promise. It wasn't merely that land reform was a longstanding demand of the Filipino peasant, "Land to the tiller!" having taken on a mythical resonance. It was also that—as the Asian countries that had made vast economic strides had shown—land reform was an essential premise for progress. Land reform didn't just democra-

tize wealth in those countries, which thwarted revolution, it increased incomes and created the domestic demand that fueled their industrialization. It was so in Japan, Taiwan and Korea, countries where the elite was threatened by popular unrest.

Cory's refusal to "land-reform" Luisita was not lost on the landowners, or supporters of landowners, in Congress, who promptly bored more holes in CARP than could sink the Titanic. As it stands now, it is a land reform *phote* honored in the breach than in the enforcement: the exception is the rule.

Completely tragically, Edsa I and II have not only failed to carry out a revolution, notwithstanding that "revolution" is a word that has been hitched to "Edsa" like a carriage to a horse, at least in the sense that Narciso Reyes proposed it—they have delivered the country into the hands of the most reactionary elements in society. The "spectacular divide" between rich and poor, which Ninoy Aquino and others fulminated against before martial law, has not narrowed, it has widened. The social volcano boils with volatile magma more than ever.

But lest we see this as a failure of Edsa alone, history should disabuse us of the thought. It is a failure of all our revolutions, violent or peaceful, from the Philippine Revolution or revolutions of 1896 and 1899, against the Spanish and Americans respectively, to the Huk uprising during the Japanese Occupation, to the last two Edsas. All these events tell the story of an elite, torn by strife, coming together to meet a threat of sweeping change. All these events tell the story of an elite either thwarting a popular uprising or hijacking it, and re-imposing its will on the society. And these events tell of a widening gap afterward between rich and poor as the emerging power attempts to chart a path to progress that precludes changing the status quo. All these events tell of why we remain backward even as our neighbors have gone where the developed countries have gone before.

It isn't just the story of Edsa, it is the story of our lives.

(To be concluded)

A leverage game

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



not a lawyer—he tolerated my prying, even so carefully, into some big cases. Some street marchers were puzzled and uncomfortable with some of his decisions affecting the Marcoses and their cronies. They expressed fear of his, perhaps, being “influenced,” like some others. I never believed them—I felt so sure of Garchitorena’s integrity. A day after he ruled promulgando in one case, I called his attention to this perception. He explained that the case was so poorly handled by the prosecutors that it just couldn’t stand in court. “That’s the way the system works. You cast aside your prejudices and confront the facts as they are presented; if they present sloppy work, you have no choice but to throw it out.” I could imagine the agonizing he doubtless went through in making that decision.

In his retirement, Garchitorena was a regular “texter” to this column, confronting me about errors I or my subject had made. Once he questioned a claim former Senate President Jovito Salonga had made here about legal personalities who worked against Marcos in the martial law years. He checked out his facts at the Ateneo archives. Then he texted that Salonga was correct and apologized. That was Garchitorena, meticulous to a fault and, for all his seeming pomposity, quite humble when need be. I was just wondering: Was this meticulousness the reason he piled up so many unresolved cases, prompting the Supreme Court to suspend him in November 2001?

I’m glad the 60th anniversary of the Liberation of Manila was celebrated by the media with a big bang. In particular, there was the story about how President Quezon, grandfa-

ther of INQUIRER columnist Manuel Quezon III, helped save the lives of over a thousand Jewish refugees here. Cecile Alvarez and I did our share in recalling those heartwrenching events of 60 years ago by inviting for two consecutive Sundays in our dzRH program three Filipino veterans who relived their war experiences in Luzon. We wanted to highlight the bravery, heroism and love of country of these vets, then in their early 20s, as a lesson especially to today’s youth, for whom World War II is just a topic in their history class. The war events were etched in the aging vets’ memory and their tales remained gripping even after more than 60 years.

I have known USAFFE Col. Rafael Estrada from my days as assistant to his close friend, one-time Ateneo president Fr. Pacifico Ortiz, who had served as the youthful chaplain of Quezon during the war. UP-trained lawyer Estrada, now 84 years old, was one of about 65,000 Filipinos who fought side by side with 12,000 American soldiers in the Bataan peninsula until its fall in April 1942. He and the other survivors, exhausted and sick of malaria, were forced into the infamous “Death March” from Km. 180 to Capas over five days, and incarcerated in the Japanese prison camp there for the next five months. In the later months, he recalled, prisoners were dying at the rate of 500 a day.

But the Death March was not without its funny anecdotes. Estrada recalled that at the San Fernando junction, they were met by the family of marcher Ramon Pamintuan of the prominent Angeles City family, who brought sandwiches which they threw to the starved marchers when the Japanese guards were not looking. Seeing the bread edges trimmed off, the marchers felt bad as they could have feasted on those, too. Estrada, who comes from a landed family in the Capas area, also recalled that their workers egged him to escape during the march, assuring him he would be safe in the sugarcane field. But his group, composed of Ateneo and UP boys, had made a pact that they would not separate. (To be continued)

The truth, this time

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Noralyn Mustafa



to examine Dr. Laraki’s report and, maybe, with a minimum of discernment, get to the bottom of an issue which, a preponderance of evidence notwithstanding—as a detective would say—manages to evade fact.

The report is actually an enumeration of the government’s sins of omission and betrayal of trust. The paper is also significant in that it was submitted to the OIC in 1999. The plebiscite to determine the area of autonomy was yet to be held that year; this, according to the report, Misuari sought to postpone, including the elections, insisting that he should remain as governor of the ARMM until the “full implementation of the peace agreement.”

But the elections and plebiscite were held as mandated by law, and on Nov. 19, 2001, forces loyal to Misuari—refusing to recognize the 15-man central committee formed in April of that year—attacked the 104th army brigade headquarters. As a result, 100 people were killed and Misuari was arrested. He is now facing rebellion charges.

The report also includes capsule profiles of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Abu Sayyaf. Though written six years ago, it may yet provide us with some clues to the cause of our present woes.

“The MILF,” says the report, “is the second most credible and important Muslim organization after the MNLF.”

“Incidents point to the fact that members and supporters of the MILF are the target of government-led military operations. Under such difficult circumstances, the MILF is taking the neces-

sary measures to reshuffle its military command for better self-defense.

“The MILF’s main claim is to set up an independent Islamic state in the areas it controls.

“The Abu Sayyaf Group ranks third in terms of the number of men and the strength. It is an independent Islamic group fighting its way against government forces into recognition of Muslim rights. The movement’s leader Abdul Razzaq Janjalani was killed December 18, 1998, in a clash with government forces. But while the Abu Sayyaf Group is considered as an Islamic movement whose goal is to recover Muslims’ rights, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines views it as an extremist, terrorist movement.”

A year later in April 2000, the Abu Sayyaf kidnapped 21 Europeans and Malaysians in the island-diving resort of Sipadan, Malaysia.

In her latest pronouncement, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo sounded like she was backed by solid facts when, citing military intelligence, she implied that there was an alliance between the Misuari MNLF forces and the Abu Sayyaf.

Charts were shown in TV newscasts, to illustrate the network linking the MNLF, the ASG, the Jemaah Islamiyah and “renegade” MILF to one another and to the series of bomb blasts that killed and maimed scores of innocent people.

The distrust of Muslims is again at an all-time high. And Muslim communities in Metro Manila increasingly fear of arbitrary arrests and other forms of discrimination. This is the kind of social divisiveness, heavy as it is with religious overtones, that we need like a hole in the head in our present situation.

The military might have overrun camps of known MNLF and Abu Sayyaf commanders. But those camps were mere structures; they can be rebuilt. Nothing has been won except control of a piece of territory.

It is time to face the greatest, most crucial battle of all—the fight for truth.

Comments to rubaiyat19@yahoo.com

Anonymous victim

WHEN most of us thought that kidnappings were already a thing of the past, came the news last week that a young Chinese-Filipino was abducted, then safely recovered. A former congressman and a close friend of the victim’s mother are believed to be behind the crime.

Like the rest of the media, the INQUIRER gave full play to the incident. The circumstances behind the kidnapping and the efforts taken by the police authorities to save the 3-year-old victim were front-page news. The two major TV stations competed, as usual, toe to toe in covering the developments in the case.

But there was something different with the way the INQUIRER reported the news: it did not disclose the name of the child. He was referred to in the news “generically”—that is, only his age and ethnic roots were mentioned.

This omission caught the attention of a group of senior journalism students who write to me from time to time, asking for explanation about some of the newspaper’s editorial policies.

They noticed that the INQUIRER kept under wraps the identity of the victim in spite of the fact that all the other broadsheets, tabloids, radio and TV stations had come out with that information. They asked: “Isn’t the newspaper short-changing its readers by not providing them full and complete details about this sensational crime?”

The students’ observation about the absence of the victim’s name is correct. The newspaper deliberately withheld (and continues to do so up to the present) the publication of the victim’s name, his place of residence and the school he attends.

Some information, though, was given about his parents and relatives, although they were rather scanty.

Editorial policy

The decision of the editorial staff to maintain the anonymity of the victim is based on a policy it adopted more than a year ago on the handling of crimes involving children and women.

The safety and protection of the privacy of the child (defined as anybody below the age of 18) or woman are the primary considerations for this “no disclosure” policy. The staff believes the integrity of news reports on crimes involving those sectors of our society will not be adversely affected if their names or personal information about them are not divulged.

The same principle applies to photos. As much as possible, the pictures of the crime victims are not published; but if the publication cannot be avoided for one reason or another, the pictures are “pixelized” or digitally made obscure to prevent their identification by third parties.

The staff thinks the victims and their families have suffered enough from the harrowing experience they went through. Mentioning their names in the news reports would only aggravate the emotional trauma they suffered and will continue to suffer as a result of the crimes committed on them.

Erasing memories about the crime would be in the best interest of the victims. Besides, does publishing their names add anything substantial to the news?

In the recent kidnap case, I think the readers were able to read what they needed and deserved to know about the incident even if the name of the victim was not mentioned in the news.

Standards

The newspaper is aware that other media outlets disclosed the identity of the 3-year-old victim immediately after news about his recovery was made public by the police.

But the editorial staff does not believe this action by its fellow journalists justifies changing the INQUIRER’s policy on protecting the identity of minors who are crime victims. While it is true that a Code of Ethics has been promulgated by the Philippine Press Institute for our local journalists, its interpretation and implementation have been basically left to the judgment and discretion of the individual journalists or publications.

Each newspaper has its own rules and regulations on what can be published and what cannot, or when information about the subject of a news report ought to be disclosed or kept under wraps.

The INQUIRER respects the action taken by its colleagues in the profession on the latest kidnapping case and does not want to make any moral judgment about it. It leaves the readers to decide, through their patronage, whether or not the newspaper’s decision to protect the privacy of the young Chinese-Filipino victim lives up to its commitment to report the news that the public has a right to know.

At this juncture, it is worth mentioning that last year, Congress enacted Republic Act 9262, also known as the Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004. The law states, among other provisions, that all records pertaining to cases of violence against women and children are considered confidential.

Anybody who publishes or causes to be published the name, address, telephone number, school, business address, employer or other identifying information of a victim of such act of violence or an immediate family member, without the latter’s consent, can be held liable for contempt of court.

The penalty for violation of this ban is one year imprisonment and a fine of not more than P500,000.

The readers’ advocate may be reached at the following address: “The Readers’ Advocate” c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascarido Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or reader-sadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

Worse criminals

“Legally knowledgeable judges who have no regard for ethics are dangerous to society; they may turn out to be worse than the criminals they sentence to jail.”
—Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban on the Supreme Court’s decision to sanction negligent and dishonest judges

Labor of love

“Love your work. If you do, then commitment and dedication will follow.”
—Sheritta Daguisanan, recipient of Microsoft’s first Philippine Innovative Teachers Leadership Awards

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SOME House members reacted with hilarity to Sen. Aquilino Pimentel’s lament that they are deliberately holding up the bicameral conference on the 2005 budget. They stressed the shoe-in-the-other foot situation: now the senators are fidgety about that budget because each of them has a P200 million allocation, while the House members only have P40 million each. But Pimentel may be partly right: many House members are quite frustrated about the way the Senate has sat on the first VAT bill that was approved by the House, and may now use the budget approval as a kind of leverage to get the Senate’s approval for the VAT.

But while the Senate is still talking of the first VAT bill, scheduled today at the House is the second reading of the second VAT bill that seeks to lift exemptions and approve individual amendments. Expect debates on such items as the amount of VAT on essential *masa* food. But the House is said to be determined to finish deliberations by tomorrow at the latest, so it could transmit this second VAT bill to the Senate. This means that the Senate will have to work on two VAT bills before the March 17 Holy Week recess.

I had known Francis Garchitorena for a long while, he being an alumnus of the Ateneo University, which my six brothers also attended. His Jesuit training was deeply imbedded in his system. A few months ago, he sent me a text message reacting to something I wrote about corruption in government. He recalled what the old Ateneo taught its alumni, “including people like your brothers and me.” But he also noted that some of the school’s alumni earned the distinction of being among the most corrupt.

Garchitorena easily set himself apart in the old marching days against Marcos with his acerbic wit and sharp and articulate tongue, perhaps, among the sharpest and most articulate this country has ever produced. As he presided over the Sandiganbayan for 16 years, his sharp tongue frightened many a lawyer; but because I had known him for decades—and I’m

IN HIS report, titled “On the Question of Muslims in Southern Philippines” (submitted to the 26th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso June 28-July 2, 1999), Organization of Islamic Conference Secretary General Dr. Azeddine Laraki stated: “The MNLF is on the verge of losing its credibility with its people and Mujahideen freedom fighters because of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines procrastination, prevarication and filibuster tactics with regard to the implementation of the peace agreement.”

To this day—with almost six years gone by—the same lament is repeated whenever there is a breakout of hostilities between Moro armed groups and the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The non-compliance by the government with the terms of the GRP-MNLF Peace Agreement, which was signed on Sept. 2, 1996, has also been the complaint of MNLF Chair Nur Misuari and his followers since that time, and the issue has surfaced again in the wake of the recent gun battles between the so-called Misuari MNLF faction and the government military.

The sporadic fighting, which has brought six battalions of AFP soldiers, helicopter gunships and bomber planes to this tiny island, has resulted in the death of over 35 servicemen with 85 injured, an undetermined number of MNLF and Abu Sayyaf killed, and close to 20,000 civilians evacuated.

And while both the Misuari camp and the AFP blame each other as to who first pulled the trigger, with both sides determined that there will be “no retreat, no surrender,” guess who’s going to weep?

The damage to public and private property (especially schools) has not been quantified so far. But surely unquantifiable is the grief and the desperation, the trauma and the sense of loss, the confusion that come with losing grip of a familiar, normal existence and its supposedly secure moorings, like going to school.

In the meantime, it is certainly worth our while

Owing people we never met

FROM ARACELI Lorayes comes this extremely kind letter: “Your articles on your grandfather’s efforts to save Jews were very touching. As a Filipino I felt very proud; but also I realized that indirectly I owe my life to the late President Quezon. As a child of two, I became ill of some childhood disease, and was administered penicillin. Instead of getting better, my condition deteriorated until I was at the point of death. Our family physician called in a Jewish doctor who, according to my mother, took one look at me and ordered all medication stopped. He had recognized the symptoms of anaphylactic shock, a severe allergic reaction to antibiotics. At that time, penicillin was still the miracle drug, and not much was known about any adverse side effects. Had your grandfather not permitted that Jewish doctor entry into the Philippines, I would not have survived. It is amazing, really, how the threads of our lives are entwined with those of people we have never met.

“Growing up, it never occurred to me to wonder why there were foreign doctors practicing in the Philippines, and why at St. Theresa’s College we had a foreigner, Mrs. Brings, as our PE teacher. (Her husband taught physics, I believe, at the University of the East or Far Eastern University.) They were simply part of the human landscape of our youth. After reading your articles, I now realize that they must have been part of the Jewish immigrants who came to the Philippines before the war.

“My only regret is that this episode of our history was not known earlier. A foreigner acquaintance once said that our history is such a sad one; but as far as I am concerned, it is illuminated by the acts of heroism of our forebears and now, the compassion of your grandfather.”

Reader Bill Bish in New York State writes: “I read your latest in the INQUIRER (online, of course)

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



about the American way of waging war. As usual, your research is impeccable and your mastery of the use of the language is excellent. But one question comes to mind—what if the Japanese had walked away from the city as was done at the beginning of the war? What if they had declared the city an “open city”? We can always use hindsight to criticize what occurred in history but unless we endeavor to place ourselves in the shoes of those who were living at the time and making the decisions, we fail to fully grasp the lessons of history. Does an alliance with the United States sometimes entail risk? Of course. But risk is why alliances are formed. In the long view, I believe that the long Philippine alliance with the United States has benefited both countries. It is not perfect but neither has it been a failure.

“Keep up the thought-provoking work. It makes your readers think and that is a good thing.”

James Litton sent the following fascinating information: “In your column of January 10, 2005, titled ‘Zoo Stories,’ you wrote that the site of the present Manila Zoo represented ‘the last surviving patch of a much bigger pre-war public park.’ This is not correct. The site of the present Manila Zoo was the pre-war city dumps of the City of Manila, the pre-war equivalent of ‘Smokey Mountain’ or ‘Payatas.’ Goes to show how small Manila was before the war. The street that bounded the northern part of the present Zoo, now named

Quirino Ave., used to be named ‘Cortabitarte.’ Some of the animals at the Jardin Botánico did not starve. Many escaped their cages. At one time, the Acacia trees of Isaac Peral (now UN Ave.) was full of monkeys that escaped from the old Manila Zoo. I know all this from personal knowledge as I lived before and during the war in Isaac Peral Street. Going to La Salle every morning, we would pass Cortabitarte and the City Dumps, now the site of present Manila Zoo.”

Carlos Esteban wrote: “In your recent article on the late Bill Shaw, you wrote that Mr. Shaw had a *mestizo* son by his Filipina wife. Bill Shaw had an adopted Filipino son named Joe Shaw. Joe, though good-looking, was no *mestizo*. His features were as Pinoy as *balut*. Joe was a good friend as we would see each other and play golf together every Sunday in Wack-Wack in the pre-war years. Unfortunately, Joe squandered his inheritance and died an alcoholic and a very poor man.”

Apropos of the same column, Robert Basilio wrote: “Just wanted to let you know that I’m hoping that your columns regarding racism will prove to be useful to many Filipinos, many of whom love so many things American and will try everything just to become American and white. On some level, we’re some eighty million Michael Jacksons who want to be white. Keep up the good work and let’s hope many will read your columns.”

My continuing thanks to all readers who take time to write me and share their thoughts and views, as well as their reactions, to what I’ve written. I’m actually way behind in answering my mail, particularly snail mail which tends to pile up at the INQUIRER office. Rest assured I read every letter. I apologize ahead if I can’t reply to every communication.

My website is at www.quezon.ph

Bombings call for probe of use of intelligence funds



WHO is to blame for the recent bombings in the cities of Makati, General Santos and Davao? The government blames the terrorists. It seems that such incidents are easily blamed by the government on terrorists. And it is good enough that terrorist groups readily own them up. But we think the government, to some extent, should also share the guilt—for getting caught flat-footed and helpless.

It's about time we investigated how government intelligence funds are used. But, of course, we know that the government will

not readily divulge details on the use of the funds. As usual, it will reason out that any such revelation is might derail military or police operations. That's understandable. But at least, it should tell us how much goes to the police, military and other law enforcement agencies; and the accomplishments of these government agencies, particularly on their alleged crackdowns on anti-government groups and anti-terrorist activities.

We are paying our taxes to the government believing that it can

protect our lives and property from harm, but the recent bombing incidents have proven otherwise. We suspect that the government is not using properly its intelligence funds. Come to think of it, the government is sometimes not even aware that it has people within its ranks who are undermining it.

The Oakwood mutiny is a typical example. The military men or policemen who are members of crime syndicates (kidnapping and drug trafficking) are another case in point. So are the public officials who have been amassing unex-

plained wealth these many years. If only the intelligence funds of the government are used wisely, many heinous crimes can be prevented.

We are sorry to say, but we have doubts about the people in the government who are in charge of or have access to these funds. They have a lot of explaining to do to us taxpayers.

—REGINALD B. TAMAYO,
member, Sangguniang Bayan,
Aparri, Cagayan

Gay warriors in the ranks of the New People's Army

I WAS amazed to see on the front page of the INQUIRER a photo of a same-sex marriage rite where women from the ranks of the New People's Army, executing, as honor guards, a cross-rifle of M12s and M14s. (PDI, 2/7/05)

The sight made me wonder how the NPA was able to acquire them. I thought that arms of those models were the exclusive issue for our armed forces. Until then, I thought that the firearms used by the NPA consisted mostly of old models.

And I thought that the NPA espoused Filipino culture in its fight against the government. If I am not mistaken, the Filipino culture practiced by our parents and ancestors considered marriage as a union of two people of different sexes.

Finally, I just wonder if homosexual marriage is countenanced by Luis Jalandoni and Jose Maria Sison, the NPA's top bosses.

—FACUNDO S. TALLO,
182/6 North 1st Angela Village,
Talon 4, Las Piñas City

Incomplete, not incorrect

EUGENIA Duran Apostol's article, "2 Edsas the same: No real change of heart," (PDI, 2/24/05) was incorrectly edited.

Fidel V. Ramos did not barricade himself with Juan Ponce Enrile and Gregorio Honasan at Camp Aguinaldo. Ramos was in Crame, then Enrile and Honasan walked across Edsa to Crame because the place was smaller and more defensible.

—ANGUS L. CAMPBELL,
4402 Dallas St.,
Bangkal, Makati City

ENRILE and Honasan first barricaded themselves at Camp Aguinaldo, and they were joined by Ramos on the evening of Feb. 22, 1986, the first day of the revolution.

Minutes after his arrival at Camp Aguinaldo, Ramos, together with Enrile, held a press conference to announce their withdrawal of support for the Marcos government. A few hours after the press conference, Ramos transferred to Camp Crame. Enrile and Honasan joined Ramos in Camp Aguinaldo the next day and stayed (barricaded themselves) there till the end of the conflict.—Ed.

No genuine democracy: 19 years after Edsa I

NINETEEN years ago, the workers of Hacienda Luisita were among the heroes and heroines who stood at the front lines of Edsa I. With religious sisters and other church activists, they held up rosaries and offered flowers to the soldiers. Surely, they dreamed of a better future as they joined hands with the rest of the Filipino masses who had gathered with firm conviction to end the corrupt Marcos dictatorship.

During her term as president, Ms Corazon Aquino held the power to give them that—a better future through an honest-to-goodness agrarian reform program. But what we see today is a Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program that is a fake and a big failure. Far from improving people's lives, the deceptive Stock Distribution Option (SDO) practically ensured keeping the ownership of extremely large areas of land—the distribution of which could have benefited hundreds, if not thousands, of poor Filipino families—in the hands of one family! All the while, the poor of Hacienda Luisita suffer slave wages. In asserting their rights, they were met with brutal repression and massacre.

In reality, modern-day slavery in workplaces, land monopoly by the few, and landlessness of the poor in the country are among the outstanding economic issues that have spanned the Aquino, Ramos, Estrada and Arroyo regimes.

The present Arroyo government continues to espouse policies that ignore the roots of landlessness. Such policies contradict President Macapagal-Arroyo's New Year's message calling for urgent change.

Indeed, urgent changes are long overdue for our people to truly live in a country where democracy, social justice, freedom and peace truly reign.

As the nation marks Edsa I's 19th anniversary, the Arroyo government wastes the gains of the people's anti-dictatorship struggle as it remains deaf to the people's demands: a land reform program which will distribute vast tracts of land such as those in Hacienda Luisita; a P125 across-the-board wage hike for workers; rejection of VAT hike and other additional taxes; cancellation of payment for illegitimate foreign debts, among other urgent economic reforms that will benefit the people.

We believe that our country will surely move forward to better years and overcome the decades of indebtedness, landlessness and underdevelopment if genuine democracy will be truly practiced—when the rights of peasants and workers to land, just wages and job security are upheld; when priority is placed on providing adequate social services over payment of illegitimate debts to usurious foreign lending institutions; when development of the country's mineral resources and strategic industries are pursued within the framework of nationalist industrialization.

—AMIE DURAL
general secretary,
Promotion of Church
People's Response (PCPR),
879 Edsa Quezon City 1101

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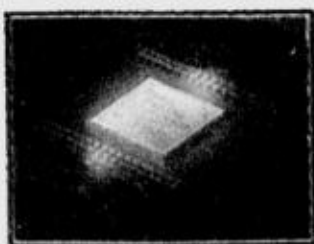
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AIM at 37

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The Asian Institute of Management is recognized as one of the top business schools in the region. Established in 1968 by an alliance among the Harvard Business School, the Ford Foundation, and distinguished visionaries of the Asian academic and business communities, AIM leads the region's socio-economic transformation by offering unique educational opportunities and cross-cultural experiences to managers from developing and developed economies in Asia and the rest of the world.

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AIM is the first and foremost graduate school of business and management in Asia, offering world-class graduate education that has molded Asia's business, development, and entrepreneurial leaders and managers since 1968.

AIM offers a unique learning experience, enriched by cross-cultural and multi-country dynamics from both developed and developing economies. AIM programs are multi-disciplinary, made possible by the range of offerings in business, entrepreneurship, and development management or public sector management. Courses are taught by an international faculty from both public and private sectors.

AIM is the acknowledged authority in Asian Management Systems, which it infuses with a global perspective. AIM develops managers who are professional, entrepreneurial, socially responsible, and committed to Asia. The Institute has a network of 30,000 graduates that spans more than 60 countries.

AIM Alumni Community Hosts the 2nd International Leadership Conference

"Global Entrepreneurship: Building the Future"

The 2nd International Leadership Conference will be held on March 3, 2005, from 1-6 pm at the Philippine Conference Hall, 3rd Floor, AIM Main Building. This year's conference will feature prominent guest speakers who have contributed significantly to the ideals of entrepreneurship.

SPEAKERS

Dr. Ralph Z. Sorenson
Co-founder, AIM

Mr. Robert V. Chandran
CEO, Chemoil Corp.

Mr. Ashok Soota
Chairman & Managing Director
Mindtree Consulting Pvt., Ltd.

Mr. Victor L.L. Chu
Chairman, First Eastern
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TOPICS

Global Entrepreneurship and the Role of Business Schools in Entrepreneurship Education

Global Marketing Strategies for Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship and the IT Industry

Entrepreneurship in China:
Its Role in the Country's Phenomenal Economic Growth

MESSAGES

A VISION FULFILLED



"THIRTY SEVEN YEARS of the Asian Institute of Management. I remember very well how it all started. We were an idealistic bunch who had dreams and visions for the future. We wanted the world to keep changing for the better. If this world were to become a better place, we had to pass on our knowledge and expertise to succeeding generations who would continue to nurture an environment that would enhance human living. This vision of a better world was where the idea of AIM emanated.

We strongly believed then as we do now that the best means of transferring what we had learned was through education. In the words of the English statesman Benjamin Disraeli, "Upon the education of this country the fate of this country depends."

We also wanted the Philippines to take the leadership in setting up the best graduate school of business in Asia. Our vision was concretized in 1968 when AIM was established. An alliance among the Harvard Business School, the Ford Foundation, and distinguished visionaries of the Asian academic and business communities, AIM has since led in the region's socio-economic transformation by offering unique educational opportunities and cross-cultural experiences to citizens from economies in Asia and the rest of the world.

I am pleased by the achievements and awards that AIM has gained over the years. I congratulate the administration, the faculty, and the staff for standing firmly behind our visions. They have paved the way for AIM to become the first world-class graduate school of management in Asia and have molded the hearts and minds of Asia's business, development, and entrepreneurial leaders and managers for the past 35 years.

My heartfelt appreciation to everyone in the AIM circle.

Washington SyCip

WASHINGTON SYCIP
CO-CHAIRMAN

A MISSION WORTH AIMING FOR

AIM's first president, Stephen H. Fuller, at the dedication ceremonies of the AIM buildings, delivered these inspiring words: "This occasion which marks the dedication of the Asian Institute of Management buildings can very well be a milestone in the economic development of Asia, for it is our hope that through these halls will pass young men and women of superior intellectual and moral capacity who, fortified by their training here, will exercise strongly beneficial influences in Asian institutions of the future."



Thirty seven years have passed and AIM's efforts in the socio-economic metamorphosis of Asia carries through. The road towards advancement has been difficult, but be that as it may, AIM's professional as well as social commitment to the people has never wavered. Now, more than ever, it is vital for AIM to continue its mission of developing professional, entrepreneurial, and socially responsible individuals who will lead the region to progress. Our Asian brothers and sisters must be led capably to higher levels of socio-economic advancement, and the AIM way is one means to ensure that we get there.

In fulfillment of our pledge, we will continue to offer our leading-edge programs, employing up-to-date learning strategies as well as practitioner-oriented research. We will retain a highly competent, dynamic, and diverse faculty and a staff who will ensure the delivery of quality services. We will endeavor zealously until this region becomes at par with, if not the best, among the economic giants of the world.

Congratulations and Mabuhay!

Jose L. Cusia, Jr.
JOSE L. CUSIA, JR.
CO-CHAIRMAN

THREE DECADES OF "FIRSTS"

More than thirty years ago, AIM's charter members convened for the first time to concretize their plans of developing a full-time MBA program of international standards. From then on, AIM has grown to a larger institution providing superior business and management education while reaching numerous milestones and garnering awards.

AIM is the premier world-class graduate school of business and management in Asia. It is the first private management education institution in the world chosen as a strategic partner of the World Bank through the establishment of the AIM-World Bank Global Distance Learning Center.

In 2000, AIM was conferred the ISO:14001 Certification for its Environmental Management System, making it the first graduate school of management in the world to receive this certification. In the years that followed, more international accrediting institutions recognized AIM's management education excellence. It became the first school in Southeast Asia to be accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS).

As we earn more feathers in our caps, we thank the people behind AIM's success. Without their cooperation, the realization of the dream that began more than three decades ago would not have prospered.

Congratulations, AIM!

Roberto F. de Ocampo
ROBERTO F. DE OCAMPO
PRESIDENT

AIM and ADB

A Partnership for Asian Progress



The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has designated AIM as a Center of Excellence, making it a pilot networking institution in knowledge creation, management and strategic programs intended to cultivate progress in Asian societies.

As frontrunners in the promotion of Asia's growth, the ADB and AIM share fields of research and focus: governance, leadership, competitiveness, poverty reduction, globalization and the environment.

The 1st Asian Corporate Social Responsibility Awards



The best corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices in the region were recognized at the first Asian CSR Awards held during the second annual Asian Forum on Corporate Social Responsibility in Bangkok, Thailand. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra presented the awards.

The Awards, presented by the AIM-Ramon V. del Rosario Sr. Center for Corporate Responsibility, recognizes best corporate practices in four categories: environment management, education support, poverty alleviation, and policies to promote socially responsible practices.



In October 2002, the World Bank selected AIM as its strategic partner in Asia with the inauguration of the AIM-World Bank Development Resource Center (DRC). This makes AIM the first private management education institution in the world to partner with the World Bank.

AIM Receives EQUIS & AACSB Accreditation



In 2003, AIM was awarded the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) accreditation by the European Foundation for Management Development. In April 2004, AIM achieved accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International). AIM is the only graduate school in the country to receive an international accreditation from either accrediting body and only the second graduate business school in Asia to receive this honor for both the European and American-based systems.



A New Center of Excellence

Mirant Center for Bridging Societal Divides



By founding this center, AIM and Mirant Philippines take a critical step towards a "world with greater human equality". The Center will promote the development of leaders in Asia who are able to recognize societal divides, mobilize and assemble different stakeholders to own the divides, and come up with collaborative action that will bring about stakeholder empowerment to address and reduce societal issues. The launch was followed by the Center's inaugural lecture featuring Dr. Peggy Dulany, founder and chairperson of the Synergos Institute.

DEVELOPMENT



RESOURCE CENTER

The DRC has two components. The Knowledge for Development Center is a depository library that provides AIM students and the general public with access to more than 20,000 development-related multi-media publications of the World Bank and other institutions and organizations. The Global Distance Learning Center is a dedicated video-conferencing venue linked to the World Bank's headquarters in Washington, D.C. and various Distance Learning Centers.

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

February 28 - March 5, 2005

Monday, February 28, 2005

8:00 am - 8:30 am
International Flag Raising Ceremony
Venue: AIM Front Lawn

Monday to Thursday February 28 - March 3, 2005

8:00 am - 9:00 pm
Students' Food and Crafts Exhibit
Venue: Jaime V. Ongpin Quadrangle (Zen Garden)

8:00 am - 9:00 pm
Students' Photo Exhibit
Venue: Highway facing Jaime V. Ongpin Quadrangle (Zen Garden)

5:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Students' Film Festival
Venue: Philippines First Holdings

Wednesday, March 2, 2005

8:30 am - 5:00 pm
AIM Leadership Golf Tournament
Venue: Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club

Thursday, March 3, 2005

9:00 am - 11:00 am
AIM Scientific Research Foundation
Annual Board of Trustees Meeting
Venue: Function Rooms 1-4
G/F AIM Conference Center

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Registration for 2nd International Leadership Conference
Venue: Philippine Conference Hall
AIM Main Bldg.

2:00 pm - 6:00 pm

2nd International Leadership Conference and
Alumni Recognition Ceremony
Venue: Philippine Conference Hall
AIM Main Bldg.

6:00 pm - 12:00 mn

Students' International Cultural Night
Venue: Jaime V. Ongpin Quadrangle (Zen Garden)

Friday, March 4, 2005

7:00 am - 7:30 am
Requiem Mass in honor of Dr. Stephen Fuller
Venue: Philippine Conference Hall
AIM Main Bldg.

7:30 am - 9:00 am
Breakfast reception in honor of Dr. Stephen Fuller
Venue: Philippine Conference Hall
AIM Main Bldg.

9:00 am - 6:00 pm

Meeting of the Joint Boards of Governors and Trustees
Venue: SGV Conference Hall
AIM Conference Center

8:00 pm - 12:00 mn

AIM Grand Alumni Homecoming
Venue: AIM Parking Lot

Saturday, March 5, 2005

9:00 am - 12:00 mn
Meeting of the Joint Boards with the AIM
Multi-stakeholders (cont.)
Venue: SGV Conference Hall, AIM Conference Center

PNP exec scored for 'disrespect' to dead scribe

MABALACAT, Pampanga—The Pampanga Press Club on Sunday condemned Chief Supt. Rowland Albano, Central Luzon police director, for ordering a bomb inspection during the wake of a journalist here on Tuesday.

In a statement, the PPC called Albano's order "disrespectful."

"A group of policemen swooped down [on] the wake [on Feb. 22], creating panic among mourners," said Beth Fabian, widow of local publisher Fyodor "Ody" Fabian.

She said the policemen checked the wreaths and her husband's coffin for bombs. "I wish the policemen behaved in a more rational manner," she said.

Colleagues and relatives of Fabian counted at least 15 policemen at the St. Jude Thaddeus Chapel in Barangay San Francisco here an hour before Albano arrived at noon on Feb. 22.

"It's conduct unbecoming of a gentleman and officer but also of a Filipino. We know how we Filipinos revere our dead. That is a blatant disregard for that Filipino value," the PPC said.

Supt. Rosve Manulid and Senior Supt. Jimmy Restua, Mabalacat and Angeles police chiefs, respectively, denied sending their men to conduct the security check.

Albano, in a telephone interview, said he did not give such instruction. "Why should I? He's already dead. I came there to pay my respects," he said.

Asked who prescribes security protocol for regional police directors, Albano said: "I don't know."

Earlier, the PPC, the Society of Pampanga Columnists, the Angeles City Press and Radio Club, and the Central Luzon Media Association-Pampanga chapter denounced Albano for his "arrogance and cavalier attitude" toward the media.

The groups challenged Albano to "put up or shut [up]."

The statement came after Albano, during a Feb. 2 fellowship, said: "Masaya naman kayo dahil tinatanggap nyo naman yung sa inyo (Why complain? You've been receiving yours)."

The groups said Albano was implying that local journalists were on the take.

The media groups also condemned the threats on Rodgie Pangilinan, CLMA Pampanga president.

One of the text messages he received went: "Tigilin nyo ang pag-banat kay RD (regional director Albano). Baka mapasama kayo (Stop hitting RD. You might get into trouble)."

Another message went: "Ilan na bang beses na-Armalite ang station (dwGV-FM/AM) nyo (How many times has your station been shot?)" referring to an ambush of that station in 2001 and a strafing incident in 2002.

In Cagayan Valley, Bishop Ramon Villena of Nueva Vizcaya assailed the people behind the threats and harassment received by journalists in the region recently.

Two Isabela correspondents have been charged with libel and at least eight others in Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya have reported receiving death threats through text messages and letters.

Villena, also co-chair of the Regional Development Council in Cagayan Valley, urged the police to use "all the might and resources of the government to track down the suspects because threats against a journalists lessen the essence of freedom and democracy." Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk, with a report from Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

2 soldiers wounded by NPA landmine

COTABATO CITY—At least two soldiers were seriously injured on Friday when communist rebels set off a landmine during a military offensive in Columbo, Sultan Kudarat on Friday, an Army spokesperson said Saturday.

The improvised landmine exploded as soldiers from the Army's 27th Infantry Battalion were attacking a position of New People's Army rebels in Barangay Databla according to Lt. Col. Franklin del Prado, spokesperson of the Army's 6th

Infantry Division based in Maguindanao.

Del Prado identified the wounded soldiers as Sgt. Jomari Carisma and Cpl. Ronelo Paro.

"The victims were among the platoon-sized contingent deployed in the village after residents sighted the presence of

about 50 heavily armed NPA rebels," he said.

Del Prado said the rebels eventually withdrew.

Recovered from the battleground were another improvised landmine, a hand grenade, electrical wirings, a cellular phone and a cassette recorder.

Del Prado said the NPA was

continuously using landmines in violation of an international law on warfare under the Geneva Convention.

"That's why we are strongly recommending that the NPA should not be delisted in the terror list of the United States," Del Prado said. Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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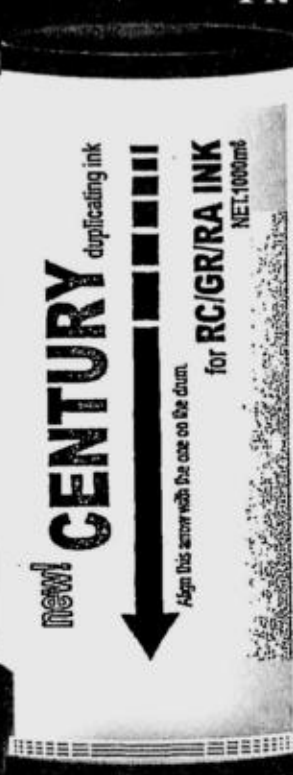
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Army soldiers won't part with Pikang

From page A1

bandits involved in the Sipadan kidnapping.

The Jaguar unit has been providing security to the chief of the 104th Infantry Brigade since the time of Col. Romeo Tolentino, the brigade's former commander.

This month alone, Pikang figured prominently in the operations against followers of jailed Moro leader Nur Misuari and the assault on the Abu Sayyaf's Camp Karawan here.

K-9 unit dogs are trained to sniff out explosives and illegal drugs. Pikang never trained for K-9 work but she could distinguish the smell of gunpowder, according to Capt. Abe Sirajan, deputy commander for operations of the 104th Infantry Brigade.

Pfc. Michael Vincoy said Pikang would "act as an advance security for the troops, sniffing the road for signs of danger."

She would signal the troops "by stopping" if she smelled danger, he added.

"She gets fidgety if she senses people [around] aside from the soldiers so that really helps us," Sirajan said, citing some major military-initiated offensives against the Abu Sayyaf in Talipao town in 2002.

He noted that Pikang's ability to sense danger had resulted in minimal casualties among soldiers and zero casualties in the Jaguar unit.

Just a puppy

Pikang was just a puppy when she first entered the lives of the seven-man team.

Sgt. Henry Abdul said he and his comrades saw Pikang roaming around the brigade camp, then located in Barangay Busbus in Jolo.

"She was cute so we decided to adopt her," Abdul recounted.



PIKANG: Soldiers' best friend.

JULIE ALIPALA/POI MINDANAO BUREAU

The seven soldiers became so fond of Pikang, they brought her along wherever they went—including on operations, which was where she taught herself to dis-

tinguish between the safe smell of her soldier buddies from the suspicious smell of strangers and gunpowder.

Although Pikang is not in the military's roster, Sirajan jokingly said that she "is the only female member of the brigade."

Hop on

Pikang is so smart, when she sees the Jaguar unit in combat attire, she would hop on the Hummer jeep, and wait for them to board it, Sirajan narrated.

In fact, he said, her skills could be compared to that of expensive canines.

But unlike expensive dogs, Pikang is not picky with food.

"She is content with leftovers," Sirajan said.

Asked if they were willing to trade Pikang for a well-trained and expensive dog from the K-9 unit, the seven-man Jaguar team gave a resounding no.

US troops also to blame for Manila's destruction

From page A1

with the liberation of Manila. But Manila was still in enemy hands and the Japanese appeared determined to defend it to the last man.

Indeed, MacArthur had prepared a detailed plan for his entry on D-Day, Feb. 2, complete with a ceremony at the Legislative Building at which he would formally announce the liberation of the Philippines and at which he and Philippine Commonwealth President Sergio Osmeña would deliver speeches.

It was not to be. Manila did not fall like a "ripe plum." Instead Manila became one of the bloodiest killing fields in the closing months of World War II.

Orgy of massacres

The battle for Manila led to an orgy of massacres and its total destruction. The battle lasted for more than three weeks. The final battle in Intramuros was fought from Feb. 23 to Feb. 28, ending in the carnage and devastation remembered by Filipinos today as a national tragedy.

By the end of February, Intramuros was totally devastated. The last pocket of Japanese resistance at the Finance Building, which was already reduced to rubble, was flushed out by heavy artillery fire on

March 3.

According to the book, "The Pacific War," the battle left 1,010 American soldiers dead and 5,565 others wounded. An estimated 100,000 Filipinos died in the fighting. About 16,000 Japanese soldiers were killed, most of them sailors of the Japanese Manila Defense Force, which was the core of the Japanese defense of Manila.

In the monthlong battle, the book says, "the Americans and the Japanese inflicted worse destruction on Manila than the German Luftwaffe had visited upon London."

The battle, according to the book "Battle for Manila," resulted not only in the destruction of the city. The death toll in the battle compared with the 78,150 who were killed in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in August 1945 and the 84,000 who died in the fire-bombing of Tokyo by the US Air Force in 1945.

The battle for Manila was the first and fiercest urban fighting in the entire Pacific War, from the time MacArthur started his leap-frogging campaign from New Guinea in 1942, leading to the invasion of Japan in 1945. Few battles in the closing months of World War II exceeded the destruction and the brutality of the massacres and savagery of the fighting in Manila.

And in this category Manila joined the company of Warsaw as the worst devastated cities of World War II.

Wiped out

Filipinos lost an irreplaceable cultural and historical treasure in the destruction of Manila. It wiped out Manila as a cultural landmark, regarded by historians as a heritage city and famed as a living monument to European culture and colonization for more than 300 years in Asia.

Few of the visitors to Manila in the late 19th century left without rhapsodizing it as the "Paris of the Orient," whose ambience and architectural appeal were comparable to that of Shanghai, Saigon and Bangkok.

In view of the heavy price that Filipinos had to pay for the liberation of Manila, a debate developed over whether the liberation of Manila was critically important to win the war with Japan or whether there were less costly options than liberation.

King's worst fears

The destruction of Manila confirmed the worst fears of Adm. Ernest J. King, chief of US Naval Operations, who wanted to bypass Luzon and invade Formosa (Taiwan) instead, as a springboard to the invasion of Japan. According to Nalty's book, King asked Adm. William Halsey's chief of staff, Vice Adm. Robert B. Carney: "Do you want to make a London out of Manila?"

"No, sir," Carney replied. "I want to make an England out of Luzon."

In the end, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff directed MacArthur to seize Luzon, postponing the invasion of Formosa.

MacArthur's obsession

From this decision, the fate of Manila was held hostage to contending American and military strategies. The decision fired MacArthur's obsession to liberate Manila.

Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita, commander in chief of Japanese forces in the Philippines, did not intend to defend Manila.

Yamashita thought he could not feed more than a million Manila residents and doubted he could defend a large area with vast tracts of flammable wooden buildings, according to Nalty.

Pullout to Baguio

Yamashita withdrew his main forces to Baguio, where he planned to hold back American forces in northern Luzon in the invasion of Japan.

The defense of Manila fell on Rear Adm. Sanji Iwabuchi, commander of the Manila Naval Defense Force, who was committed to defend Manila to the last man. In 1942, President Manuel L. Quezon declared Manila an "open city." Yamashita did not in 1945. Iwabuchi disobeyed Yamashita's or-

der not to reenter Manila following a tactical withdrawal to the outskirts.

According to Nalty, Iwabuchi discovered a few good defensive positions except in Intramuros and among nearby buildings. "After blowing up every outline facility having even marginal value, he ordered his poorly trained men into the defensive zone, Minefields, barbed wire, trenches, the hulks of trucks and trolleys canalized the American advance toward the sandbagged buildings."

When the Americans completed the encirclement of Iwabuchi's defense on Feb. 12, they left him without an exit route, driving the battle house-to-house, building-to-building. It made Intramuros the crucial battleground.

According to the book, "The Battle for Manila," given that MacArthur viewed Manila "as the key to victory in that campaign of reconquest, the city drew him like a magnet."

Judgment clouded

The obsession, the book said, "appears to have clouded his military judgment, for his decision to surround the enemy, leaving no avenue of escape, ensured that Manila would be defended to the death."

In the debate in determining responsibility for the massacres and destruction of Manila, neither the Americans nor the Japanese came out blameless in the historical assessments.

Although MacArthur had ordered restrictions on aerial bombings and heavy artillery attack, fearing heavy casualties on civilians, tactical considerations prompted American commanders, concerned with troop casualties, to use their tactical advantage in artillery cover to smoke out suicidal Japanese defenders from their positions.

Japanese resistance

According to one account, Iwabuchi's sailors "resisted American riflemen—supported by flame-throwers, grenades, and direct fire from tanks, tank destroyers, and artillery—[who] attacked one building after another and killed the Japanese inside."

"Subjected to incessant pounding ... and facing certain death," according to this account, "the sailors took out their anger and frustrations on defenseless civilians, committing acts of senseless brutality."

The Americans were concerned over their heavy troop casualties. An American battle report says: "That the artillery had almost razed the ancient Walled City could not be helped. To the XIV Corps and the 37th Division at this state of the battle for Manila, American lives were understandably far more valuable than historic landmarks. The destruction had stemmed from the American decision to save lives in a battle against Japanese troops who had decided to sacrifice their lives as dearly as possible."

American accounts of the battle, it was pointed out by the British historians, showed that "the fate of ordinary Filipinos does not figure much." It was more common to find American participants dismissing Filipinos as "collaborators" or "looters," or "blaming the Japanese entirely for civilian deaths."

Unthinkable

In a battle report, Gen. Robert S. Beightler, commander of the 37th Division, said the battle for Manila was "a hard battle, the most costly of the war for the 37th." He said the initial limitation on the use of artillery was partially responsible for the division's high casualties. "To me," he wrote, "the loss of a single American life to save a building was unthinkable."

"I have no apologies to make," he said. "Although I know there was plenty of weeping and wailing from property owners who saw their buildings disappear in the blasts of 240mm shells. I could have had those dive bombers, too, I might have made the big rubble into little rubble."

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Pal pins blame on Roldan

From page A1

There was no mention of any safe house in Pasay in the affidavit furnished the INQUIRER.

A top police official said that Pagdanganan, 37, and Garces were to appear at a Camp Crame press conference today to talk about Roldan's alleged role in the kidnapping.

"They will finally come out in the open to reveal that Roldan indeed masterminded the kidnapping," the official said, asking not to be identified.

Panelo said the accusations against his client could be politically motivated.

He also said the supposed video on Roldan was nothing but part of a "psy-war" (psychological warfare) the PNP had come up with to "poison the mind of the public and influence the prosecutors."

Nonexistent tape

"Truth is, it's not existing," Panelo told the INQUIRER, referring to the supposed video.

"If there was indeed [a tape], police would have caught Roldan in flagrante delicto (in the act) and, as such, should have arrested him. But they did not. That only means there is no tape."

And assuming that there was such a tape, Panelo argued that would not be admissible in court, anyway.

Wang has also denied any involvement in the kidnapping.

Costly surveillance

In his affidavit, Pagdanganan said it was Roldan, "Suzette" and Garces who gave him the "job" to conduct surveillance on the boy before the abduction took place.

"They promised to give me P15 million when we get the child and the family pays," he said. "Dennis Roldan also gave

me P225,000 for expenses in our work."

He said part of the money was spent for the safe houses.

Maid screams

He said Roldan gave him P225,000 in an office at Maximus restaurant in Kamias, which police said was owned by the actor.

On Feb. 9, Pagdanganan said he, Adrian Domingo and Noel San Andres—two of those in police custody—carried out the kidnapping near Ortigas Center.

"The boy was with the maid when we snatched him and immediately brought him to our car, a Honda CRV," Pagdanganan said, adding that he believed the car might have been a stolen vehicle.

"The maid kept screaming," he said.

State witnesses?

"We brought the boy to 32 Zamboanga St., West Avenue, Quezon City," he said. "We kept him there for about four days before we moved him to Tagaytay on Feb. 13. We stayed there for two days then returned to West Avenue. On Feb. 18, we trans-

ferred to Harvard Street, Cubao."

Considering Pagdanganan's statement, police are checking if he and Garces could be made state witnesses against Roldan and Wang, according to a key figure in the ongoing investigation.

But the source said some Department of Justice prosecutors were opposed to the idea, saying it would totally strip the two of

any criminal liability.

"What they want to happen is to just turn the two into prosecution witnesses so they could help prosecute Roldan without escaping punishment," the source told the INQUIRER.

The Department of Justice has scheduled a pre-trial hearing of the case for March 4. Police have recommended no bail for the seven suspects detained.

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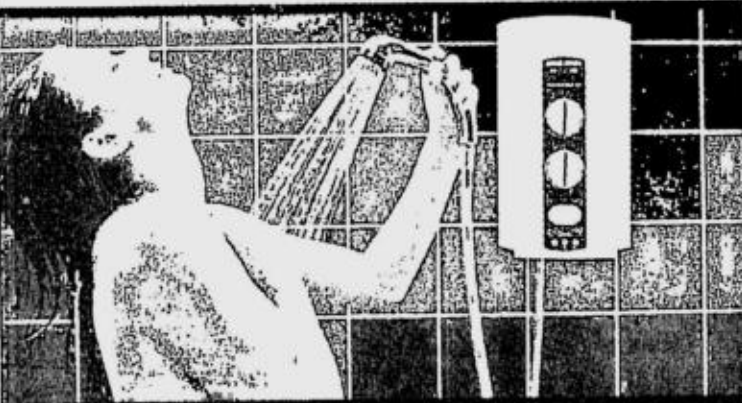
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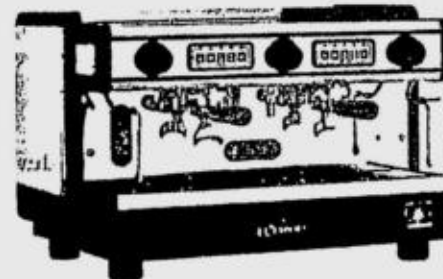
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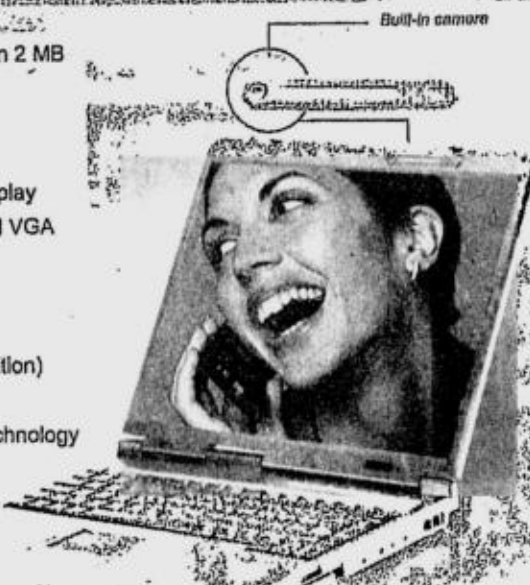
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He defied Marcos order, inspired graft-busters

From page A1

Arroyo said very few people knew that Garchitorena, who died of cancer on Friday night, had stood up to Marcos.

When he imposed martial law in 1972, Marcos issued an order "forbidding any challenge to its imposition or any of its edicts," according to the senator.

On the very day martial law was declared, Arroyo said Garchitorena filed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus in the Supreme Court on behalf of the late Sen. Jose Diokno, one of those who took on Marcos for declaring martial law.

"This was a direct and frontal challenge to the constitutionality of martial law, which Mr. Marcos precisely prohibited," Arroyo, a

former human rights lawyer, said in a statement.

With this petition, Arroyo said that then Chief Justice Roberto Concepcion, "with becoming haste and also in defiance of Mr. Marcos' order," issued the writ ordering the military to produce Diokno and set the case for hearing.

"That opened the door to challenges to martial law issuances despite the general order forbidding it," Arroyo said.

He said Garchitorena was a "brave man, bright and articulate."

Strength, inspiration

Besides Arroyo, a government auditor has paid tribute to Garchitorena.

Heidi L. Mendoza, who speaks

in antigraft seminars and lectures, said the honesty displayed by Garchitorena in the Sandiganbayan had restored her faith in the justice system.

Mendoza said it was Garchitorena who spurred her to be relentless in the fight against graft.

"He has been my strength, my inspiration. His honesty as a judge has taught me that there are still honest men in government," said Mendoza, 45, who has worked at the Commission on Audit for 19 years.

She related that her life-changing experience with Garchitorena occurred early in her career when she testified against a governor in Mindanao, who was facing malversation charges involving P30 million in the Sandiganbayan.

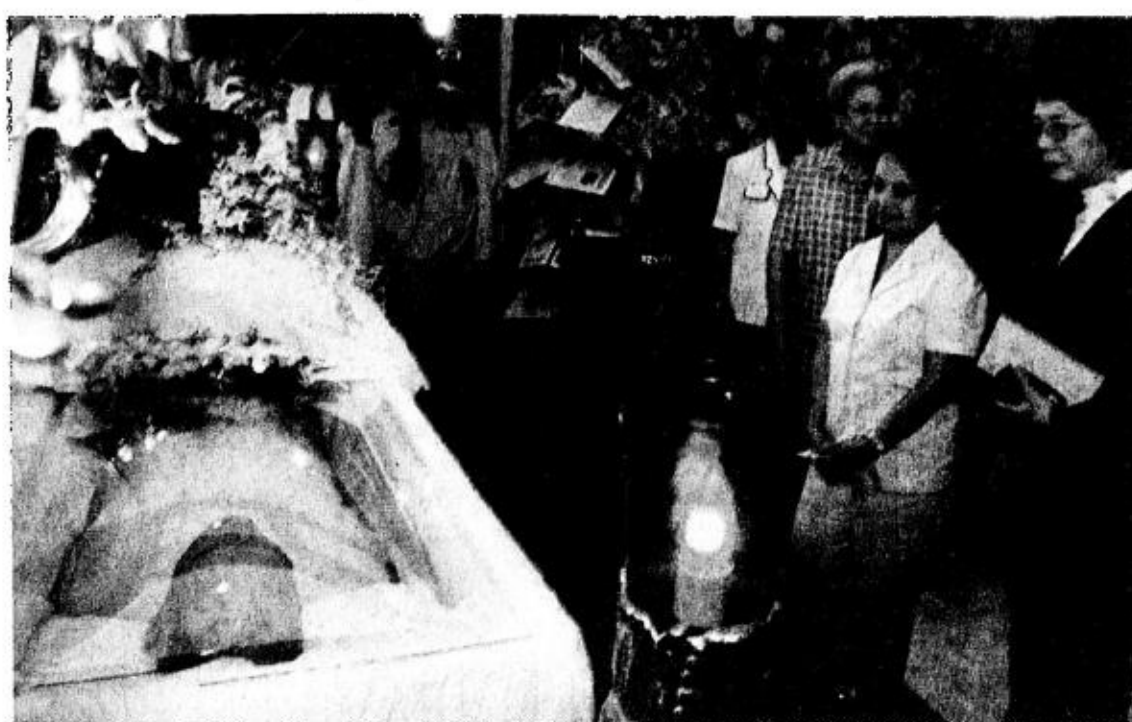
Mendoza, who prepared the COA report on the matter, asked the INQUIRER that the governor's name not be mentioned because the case was still under litigation and because she and Garchitorena had received death threats.

Governor's classmate

Although she was sure of her report, which served as the basis for the case, Mendoza said she became disheartened after learning that one of her superiors, who was working on the case, turned out to be a classmate of the governor.

When she confronted the COA official about this, the latter reportedly told her that there was no use pursuing the case because the governor's lawyers had already reached an arrangement with the justices of the Sandiganbayan first division, then led by Garchitorena.

Mendoza said her superior had



PRESIDENT Arroyo, an admirer of Garchitorena, was one of the first visitors to his wake at the Santuario de San Antonio. At extreme right is his widow, Vicky Garchitorena.

ROGER MARGALLO

told her that the governor's lawyers were to file a motion for the suspension of the hearing, a move intended to put the case on the back-burner.

But during the hearing, Garchitorena not only thumbed down the motion to suspend the hearing but also ordered the governor suspended for graft.

"Amid the collusion and corruption in the judiciary and the government in general, there was one big judge who was incorruptible," said Mendoza, who called up the INQUIRER after reading an article about Garchitorena's incorruptibility.

But she said Garchitorena was also the first judge to make her cry on the witness stand.

She said this was because Garchitorena was known to grill gov-

ernment witnesses to elicit from them statements and facts that government prosecutors had failed to draw from them.

"He knew that government officials facing graft charges could hire the best lawyers in town. He also knew that some prosecutors were either unprepared to handle the case or too weak to resist pressures and temptations to win the case. So, he went out of his way to draw out the facts needed to win the case," she said.

Illegal land deal

"He was an inspiration to COA auditors who were seriously helping the government fight graft," Mendoza said.

From then on, Mendoza had gone to handle other major graft

cases, including one in which she foiled an illegal land deal that saved the government about P220 million.

That feat made her a choice speaker in antigraft forums, including the "Ehem! Aha!" seminar lecture series of the Office of the Ombudsman and the Philippine Jesuits.

Recently, she wrote a handbook titled "A Guide to Investigation of Common Procurement Fraud and Irregularities," intended to help people understand and spot graft.

Known as the "little red book" on graft for its red cover, it is by far one of most comprehensive and detailed antigraft books written by a key player in the government's lifestyle check program.

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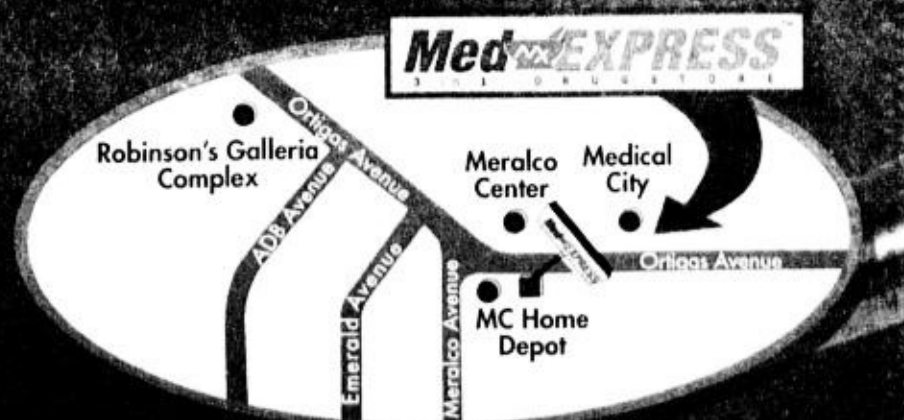


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POLICE and members of the media become familiar with Multinational Village in Parañaque City as they visit another alleged drug laboratory—the fifth found in the subdivision. MITCH MAURICIO

5th drug lab discovered in posh village

By Nancy C. Carvajal

IT'S MULTINATIONAL Village, again. Authorities seized yesterday sophisticated equipment and chemicals used for the mass production of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) inside the posh subdivision in Parañaque City. The raid at 84 Jericho Street was the second in two weeks conducted on an alleged drug laboratory in the village, where five alleged shabu factories have been found since last year. An American drug expert who joined the raid said the pieces of shabu-making equipment found in the house were similar to those found in a big laboratory in Davao City. "These are the same type of advanced equipment that were found in a raid (last month) in Davao City," said Rodel B. Babasa, US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) assistant country attaché. Babasa pointed to equipment that looked like stand fans without the fan, but according to him were rotary evaporators used in processing shabu. Seized from the three rooms inside the bungalow

were shabu rotary evaporators, glass cylinders, beakers, acetone, activated carbon, thionyl chloride and assorted chemicals used in the manufacture of illegal drugs.

"These high-tech equipment are used for mass production of shabu," the DEA agent said.

Babasa told the INQUIRER that he was invited by his local counterparts to provide technical assistance and that his presence there was official.

Members of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and the police Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operation Task Force led yesterday's raid.

According to Babasa, the kind of illegal drugs paraphernalia stored in the hastily abandoned house indicated that it was not a small laboratory.

The DEA agent, who also briefed Secretary Angelo Reyes of the Department of Interior and Local Government, and PDEA Director General Anselmo Avenido, also said the owners of the drug-making equipment could belong to the same syndicate that was busted in Davao.

According to Insp. Dominador Bartolazo, head of the city's anti-illegal drugs task force, they staked out the house after getting a tip from Leah Porqueta, who was arrested after the earlier raid last Feb. 17 at a house on Joy Street.

"We had to stop the surveillance and execute the raid because the search warrant is only good up to today," Bartolazo said.

Bartolazo said they were hoping that someone would go back to retrieve the equipment.

The houses on Jericho and Joy Streets were reportedly both rented by alleged drug lab operator Jack Yuen.

A certain Aida Wong was named as the owner of the house raided yesterday.

Meanwhile, Felix Resuello, the new president of the homeowners association, announced that they would ask residents to agree to a voluntary inspection of their houses.

Resuello said that it would be part of the preventive measures that would be implemented by the association due to the increase of illegal drugs laboratories in their village.

"The inspection would be conducted by barangay officials," he said.

Mayors implementing metro ID system

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FEELING the urgency, Metro Manila mayors have begun steps to implement a metropolis-wide ID system, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza revealed yesterday.

"There are still debates (in Congress) but we in Metro Manila are already making moves to create an identification system here," said

Atienza, president of the Metro Mayors League.

He added that the ID system was for the protection of the basic rights of individuals.

According to him, the mayors agreed in a meeting in Makati City last week to respectively pass a uniform ordinance providing for a city- or town-based ID system that would be recognized in other localities.

Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando and San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito were not at the meeting, but Atienza was confident that they would agree with the proposal.

"We are rushing it so that in a month, we would have something more solid," said Atienza.

He said a technical working group had begun drafting an ordinance for the implementation of the system.

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P1M lost in dawn robbery

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A GANG of robbers staged a 10-minute heist at the Blumentritt market in Manila before dawn yesterday and fled with about P1 million in cash from meat dealers.

Wielding .45 cal. pistols, 10 men riding in tandem on motorcycles sprung into action at about 3:50 a.m., just as the vendors were beginning another day of business in their stalls at the corner of

Felix Huertas and Antipolo Streets in Sta. Cruz.

Supt. Romulo Sapiñala, Western Police District Station 3 chief, said the robbers apparently knew that there were no policemen at the market at that time.

He explained that the policemen who regularly made the rounds of the Blumentritt Market were posted at the mobile checkpoint set up near the Manila North Cemetery, a few streets away

from the market.

"Those who were supposed to be on patrol [in Blumentritt] were diverted to the area," Sapiñala said over the phone.

The robbers then escaped northward through Rizal Avenue, cleverly avoiding the checkpoint the police had established.

Sapiñala said there were already leads on who the robbers were, but declined to give details.

METROBRIEFS

Motorists hit NLEX 'conspiracy'

MILITANT groups yesterday accused the Department of Public Works and Highways of conspiring with the private operator of the North Luzon Expressway to keep the MacArthur Highway in disrepair. "The highway was not improved so motorists would be forced to use the expressway," Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino leader Leody de Guzman told the INQUIRER yesterday. His group and its partner organizations yesterday launched a new coalition

against the steep toll fees at the rehabilitated expressway. On the other hand, lawyer Bong Vanderbilt noted that repair work being done along MacArthur Highway was contributing to traffic on the road-way. He said the traffic was meant to discourage motorists from using the MacArthur Highway. **Edson C. Tandoc Jr.**

2 children die in Navotas blaze

ROLANDO Amosco, 35, lost his year-old son and 4-year-old niece when fire razed his junk

shop on Tanigue Street, Kaunlaran Village, Navotas, yesterday morning. Amosco himself suffered burns when he tried to enter the burning shop, which was littered with old newspapers. Witnesses told fire investigators that they saw the boy, Leo Lawrence, and the girl, Maria Angelica, playing with matches inside the shop moments before the blaze at 9:50 a.m. PO2 Nicanor Zablan said the children could have run into the shop out of confusion when the fire began to grow. The two were holding on to each other when found. **Edson C. Tandoc Jr.**

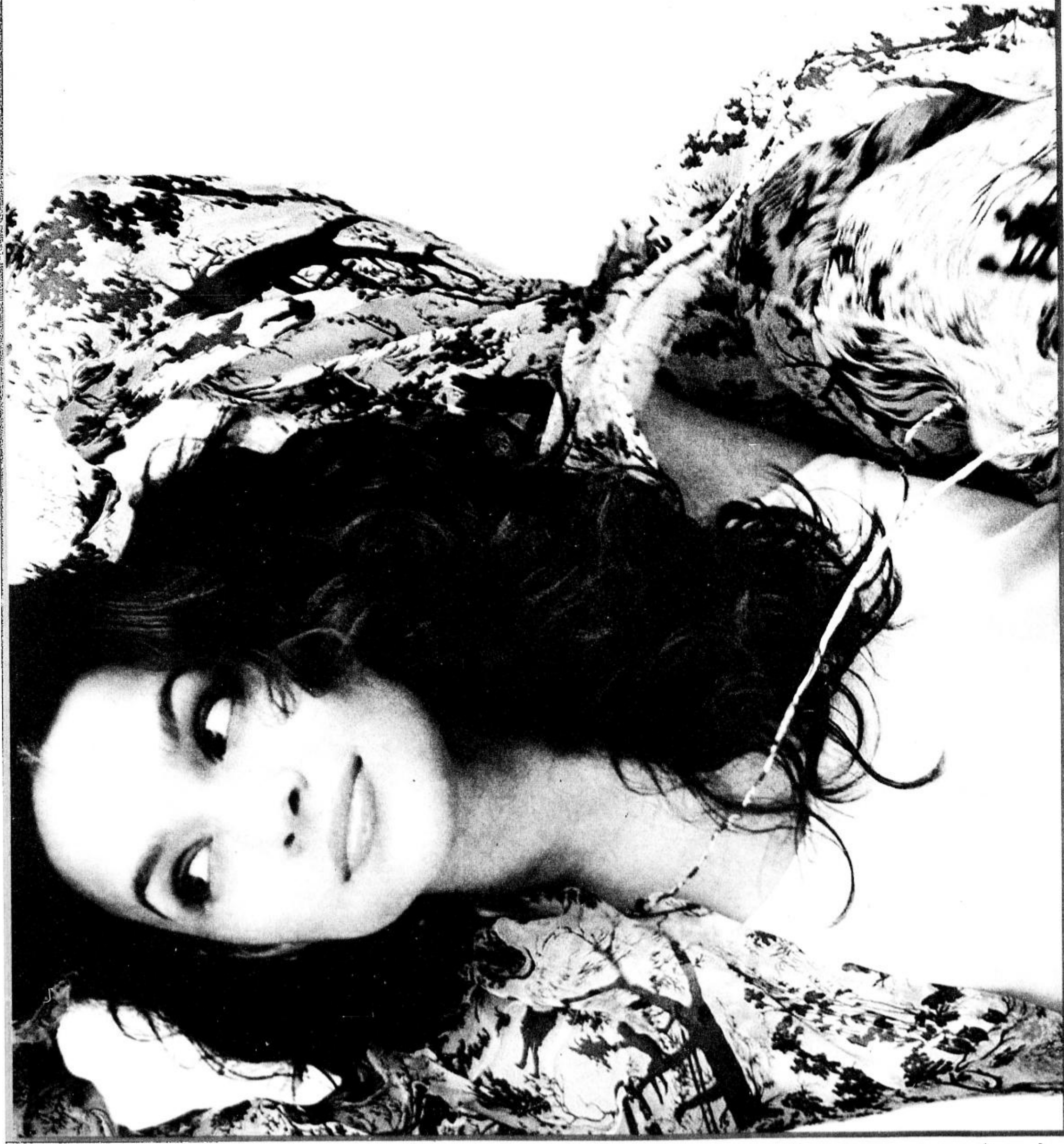
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<i>Don't Know If It's</i>	unknow	<i>Love</i>	love
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US NCAA—Providence vs Syracuse; 9:30 p.m. (7-8 p.m.); ESPN—Rewind and witness the college duel between the Friars and the Orangemen.

BILLIARDS: Rack 'Em Up—Bustamante vs Strickland; 7 p.m.; ESPN—Diango Bustamante faces Earl "the Pearl" Strickland in a battle of great cue artists. Schedules subject to change without prior notice.



Compiled by L. Manguiat

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres



J-Ro's smart play quiets Wie hype

Badminton helps Filipina ace return to shape after injury

By Jong Arcano

THERE was just too much focus—maybe even an overkill—on a teenage sensation that Jenny Rosales' feat was almost left unnoticed.



ROSALLES

Good thing the Filipina Smart endorser brought home the trophy. And Michelle Wie, the 15-year-old phenom playing before a hometown crowd, only managed to tie Cristie Kerr at second place.

Sure, the international press wanted a perfect story angle and none could have been better than a high-schooler beating LPGA stars old enough to be her mother.

Small wonder that Wie, already five down after two days, still was in the lead paragraph of wire stories. CNN also gave a lot of its precious airtime to the lanky Hawaiian over Rosales, who led the \$1-million tourney from start to finish.

But it was Rosales, fondly known as J-Ro, who made it to this season's winners' list ahead of the rest. Wie will just have to try again.

Still, the attention given Wie all week left Rosales' management team incensed.

"It's unfair for the coverage team to be focusing on Wie when someone else was playing so well and we're talking here of all three rounds of a tournament," said Jack Arroyo, whose American Eye Center firm sponsors J-Ro. "We feel that Jenny made quite a statement that the Philippines is not only about the bad publicity and travel advisories, but also home to someone who can prove anytime that she's the best in the world."

Even best friend and apparel designer Lora Roberto was surprised that two solid rounds couldn't give Jenny more mileage than Wie: "Michelle's trailing and still there's more hype on her, why?"

Roberto said the international press might have been unaware of how Jenny prepared for the season.

Coming off an injury-plagued campaign in 2004, when she won her first title in the Chick-Fil-A championship, Rosales felt she wasn't ready for a strenuous physical training like the tough Pilates sessions she went through last year. So she went for the next best option: badminton.

While her rivals burned long hours with their gym trainers, J-Ro instead sweated it out with family and friends regularly on the badminton court to supplement her regular swing checks under swing guru Bong Lopez. Rosales also made sure to hit the beach with foreign visitors and her local gang.

Lopez said that J-Ro's relaxed attitude in the off-season paid off and, if things go well especially with her fragile wrist, she might just be able to achieve the next target—a major trophy.

Last year, Rosales nearly pulled that win off, but the US Open slipped off her grip in the final round.

Rosales will play the next three tournaments in Mexico, the Safeway International in Arizona and the year's first major—the Kraft Nabisco in Rancho Mirage. She is then scheduled to fly home for a two-week break, where she's set to shoot commercials for SMART.

In a statement, SMART said Rosales' victory showed what the Filipinos could accomplish in the international stage.



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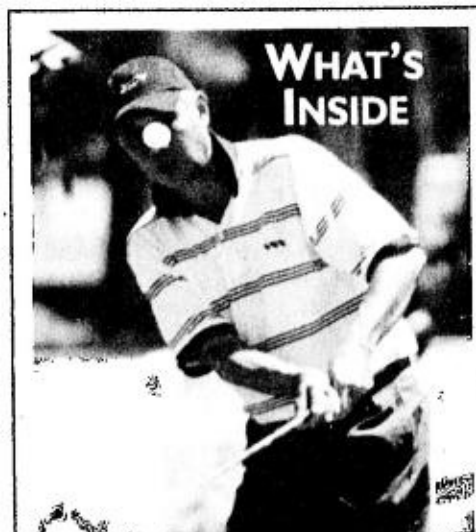
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Luisita streaks to 6th place in PAL tourney /A26

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Ladies Fed League: Orchard posts 3rd straight win

Standings (Win-Draw-Loss)
Group I: Orchard 3-0-0, Manila Golf 1-0-2, Tagaytay Highlands 1-0-2, Riviera 1-0-2
Group II: Sta. Elena 2-1-0, Forest Hills 1-0-1, Southwoods 1-1-1, Valley 0-0-2

ORCHARD held off hard-fighting visitor Tagaytay Highlands, 2-1, to complete a three-game sweep of the first round action in Group I of the inaugural Ladies Federation Golf League matches in various exclusive venues recently.

Medy Agustin and Nancy Tsai clinched the win for Orchard when they took the aggregate format via a 2&1 score after both teams split the first two matches. The Cavite golfers thus remained the only unbeaten team in the field.

Nila Patricio and Minja Ivanovic took the alternate-shot format for Orchard for a 1-0 lead but Debbie de Villa and Dione Cu evened up matters for Tagaytay Highlands.

Orchard's hard-earned win came after it posted victories over Riviera and Manila Golf in the tourney sponsored by Citibank NA, Prudential Bank and Justine Sebastian/Cathay Land Inc.

Tagaytay fell to its second loss after bowing to MGC and beating Riviera.

Sta. Elena's bid for a similar sweep was stalled by Southwoods when they battled to a 1.5-1.5 draw.

Sta. Elena took control when Shirley

Romualdez-Lucille Carlos finished off their alternate-shots rivals on the 13th hole but Southwoods pulled even behind Claire Ong-Marissa Sison in the high-low duel.

The first draw of the league was forged when Sta. Elena's Vinice Godio-Candice Yulo and Southwoods' Claudine Garcia-Florence Okiyama split the aggregate point.

Team Riviera ended a two-game losing skid with a rousing 3-0 sweep of

Manila Golf at home in Group II action.

Earning the points for Riviera were Maripaz Domingo-Leah Navarro (alternate shot), Beth Menchavez-Berna Jalosjos (high-low), Beng Ibo-Beth Salazar (aggregate).

The match between Forest Hills and Valley was postponed.

The eight teams entered in the home-and-way series are chasing the top two slots in each group that will give them seats to the Final Four.

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CANLUBANG'S Tommy Manotoc (left) hits from the fairway to the green on hole 6 en route to a 73 and his second straight individual title. Luisita's Alex Montelibano wound up second.



Luisita streaks to 6th sr plum in PAL tourney

By Musong R. Castillo

BACOLOD—Luisita's supporting cast bailed its all-star nucleus out of the woods yesterday, contributing heavily to the team's record-extending sixth title in senior PAL Interclub play after a brutal final day at the Marapara here.

The winds blew from all directions and bowled a number of big names out of the equation, with those expected to play second fiddle heeding the call as Luisita tallied 243 for a 487 total to beat Canlubang pulling away.

Iggy Claveilla rebounded from a 42 in his first nine with a 31 coming home and actually led Luisita with a three-over 73 for 51 points, with Alex Montelibano scrambling for a 74 worth 50.

Carlo Gamban, King Sumulong and Tommy Joson, who all did not count in the first round on Saturday, combined for the next 142 points after Richie Garcia (44), Bong de Guzman (35) and Francis Gaston (41) all sputtered.

13th time

Gamban amassed 49 points, Sumulong a 47 and Joson 46 as Luisita, just four up on Canlubang at the start of the day, won for the 13th time in 19 editions of this event serving as the prelude to the regular men's championship set to start on Wednesday.

The team later on shared lunch and offered a silent prayer while dedicating the victory to the late Rudy Samson, their many-time skipper who died of cancer last December.

"We know he's smiling ear-to-ear up there," said Claveilla, who wore a black pin like the rest of the members of the team in mourning.

Tommy Manotoc of Canlubang won a second straight individual title after shooting a three-over 73 and a 143 total, nipping Montelibano by three.

While Luisita's back-up crew rose to the challenge, the same could not be said of Canlubang as the next best score came from former pro Rolly Viray—a 46—before three 41s completed the Sugar Barons' 223 card for a 463 tally.

Alabang pooled a 226 led by Edwin Arcilla's 52 to finish third with a 459 aggregate, 11 shots better than fourth-placed Southwoods, which turned in a 223 spiked by Butch Brodett's third career ace.

Caloy Coscoluella salvaged a 49, Buddy Velayo accounted for 43, Gilbert Martinez assembled a 42 and either of Pete Cervantes and Mike Osmeña's 40 were the rest of the Alabang scores.

Brodett aced the 180 yard 16th hole with a 5-iron and went on to lead Southwoods with 49 markers. Freddie Mendoza (46), Pico Ching (44), Ken Onda (43) and Cres Bendijo (41) were the other scorers for Southwoods.

The tournament's third hole-in-one was made by Romy Roxas of Team Alliance of Golfers in Northern California.

Friendship play

Roxas aced the eighth hole of Binitin in nearby Murcia town in Friendship play.

Villamor pooled a 220 behind Teddy Yabes' 49 to win the Founders Division in wire-to-wire fashion over host Negros also at the Marapara.

Toto Bautista, who first scored a hole-in-one on Saturday, and former NGAP sec-gen Rico Javier signed for 44s, Pochoy Hernandez submitted a 42 and Japanese businessman Tetsuo Ochi accounted for 41 as Villamor totaled 452 to beat the Negrenses by eight.

Negros submitted a 216 for a 444, six ahead of Wack Wack (214) with Valley finishing fourth with a 433 after a 213.

Taiwan (203) and Manila Golf (219) tied for fifth spot with 419 tallies, with The Orchard finishing sixth after a 207 for 416, Bacolod (209-410) and Riviera (215-410) tying for seventh.

Pueblo De Oro (204-404), SFO Crystal Springs (199-398) and Iloilo (195-387) rounded out the top 10 scores in the Founders Division.

Over at the Binitin in Murcia town, Bert dela Rama's 42 points led the US-based Maharlika crew to a 196 for the day and a 398 total to win the Friendship Division by 30 points over Alta Vista.

Roger Pineda scored a 41, like Paul Nisperos, while Fred Caluerin and Oscar Palicte accounted for 36s for the scores that counted for Maharlika.

Top 10

Alta Vista scored 176 for 368, with Victorias finishing third after a 171 for 351. Pamplona (163-344), Travelers (171-340), Guam (160-344), Mercedes (163-330), Mt. Malindang (166-329), Capitol (165-326) and Sarangani (161-324) rounded out the final top 10 standings.

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 1. Lito Tanjunco, President - DLSAA
 2. Dr. Armin A. Luistro, FSC President - DLSU
 3. Rene J. Buenaventura, CEO - Equitable PCIB
 4. Ramon Isberto, Head Public Affairs - Smart
 5. Juan Miguel del Rosario, VP HR - Unit, Pulp and Paper Co., Inc.
 6. Franz Pumaren, Basketball Coach - DLSU

Evening Session
 (Start: 5:00 pm End: 8:00 pm)
 1. Dr. Carmelita I. Duebanga, EVP - DLSU
 2. Franco del Rosario, CEO - GSigma Consulting
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Sharapova bags Qatar title

DOHA, Qatar—Maria Sharapova, the Wimbledon champion, rallied to beat fourth-seeded Alicia Molik of Australia, 4-6, 6-1, 6-4, in the Qatar Open final on Saturday and earn her second WTA Tour title this month.

"It was a great match with lots of tense moments," said Sharapova. "I couldn't do anything in the first set because Alicia played so well."

Molik broke second-seeded Sharapova in the third game for the first set, and appeared headed for her second singles title of 2005 after winning in Sydney last month.

But a fired up Sharapova raced to 5-0 with accurate passes to even the set score, and in the decider, the 17-year-old Russian returned extremely well to break Molik in game five and hold serve, closing with an ace on match point.

"After losing the first set, I just

tried to hang in there and wait for my turn to make something happen," said Sharapova. "I am glad that I managed to play my best tennis today after the first set."

It was Sharapova's ninth career title. She won the Tokyo Open this month then took two weeks off to recover from the flu.

Molik was gracious in defeat.

"We had a great match. I can safely say that the best player in the tournament won the title here," the Australian said.

"I enjoyed coming here as I have done so in the past. I am sure I will come back to Doha next year."

Sharapova earned the \$94,000 winner's check, and Molik \$65,800, which includes the doubles title with Francesca Schiavone of Italy.

Molik, the Australian Open doubles champ, and Schiavone beat second-seeded Africans Cara Black and Liezel Huber, 6-3, 6-4, in the final.

MARIA Sharapova eyes the ball before slamming a return to Alicia Molik.



AP

Federer reaches Dubai final

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates—Roger Federer thrashed Andre Agassi, 6-3, 6-1, in the Dubai Open on Saturday and will meet Ivan Ljubicic of Croatia in a third final this year.

Top-seeded Federer beat fourth-seeded Agassi for a sixth straight time, and even more impressively than his straight-sets victory in the Australian Open quarterfinals last month.

"I have shown I can raise my game when it is important," said Federer. "I didn't expect anything like this because [of] the way I was playing. I was really struggling with my rhythm and I thought it would be really hard against Agassi. But I pulled off a magnificent match."

Federer, the two-time defending Dubai champion, will play eighth-seeded Ljubicic only a week after barely edging the big-serving Croat in the Rotterdam final. Last month, Federer downed Ljubicic in the Doha final.

"Hopefully, I will have a few spectators on my side tomorrow," Ljubicic said after firing 13 aces to knock out fifth-seeded Tommy Robredo of Spain, 6-4, 6-3, in the other semifinal.

Federer and Agassi had to double up on the day after beating Russian opponents in quarterfinals which had been postponed from Friday, because of rain. Federer downed seventh-seeded Mikhail Youzhny, 6-3, 7-5, and Agassi



FEDERER: Finals-bound

AP

topped No. 6 Nikolay Davydenko, 6-4, 7-6 (4).

Agassi had a break point on Federer at 1-1, but the Swiss star erased it with a service winner and held. The set went on serve until 4-3, when Federer broke Agassi to love, and served out for the set, winning 12 of the last 13 points.

Federer then broke Agassi in the opening game of the second set with a forehand winner on the second break point. He broke the American again with a sublime lob to go up 3-0.

The Swiss won 71 percent of his service points to Agassi's 49 percent.

"He (Federer) really picked up his level. He was just too good in the second set," said Agassi.

"I could have made a few more second serve returns and some points in the first set, I could have made a few less errors. But it was much more him out there tonight."

Federer will enter the final having won an ATP record 15 straight finals since 2003.

It will be Ljubicic's fourth final of the year, and he has yet to win one.

In Acapulco, Mexico, Rafael Nadal mixed blistering groundstrokes with a soft touch around the net to sweep past fellow Spaniard Albert Montanes, 6-1, 6-0, and win the Mexican Open on Saturday.

The 18-year-old left-hander was aggressive from the start, keeping his opponent off-balance by alternating between power and soft pushes that just floated over the net and landed loaded with top spin.

Montanes looked intimidated early and tired from then on. He double-faulted in the first set's second game to let Nadal break his serve.

Montanes went on to take just 14 points the entire first set.

"I didn't expect to win so easily. I didn't expect it to be 6-0 at the end," said Nadal, who classified his performance as "dominating."

AP

Lindsay, Serena lead US squad

WHITE PLAINS, New York—Lindsay Davenport and Serena Williams will take the court for the US Fed Cup team when it faces Belgium in a quarterfinal on April 23-24.

Williams, fresh off her Australian Open championship, and Davenport, the world's top-ranked player, will host a Belgian team that could include Justine Henin-Hardenne and Kim Clijsters. Both former No. 1s missed much of last year because of injuries.

"I'm honored to return to the US team and represent my country in Fed Cup play," Davenport said.

Davenport will play in her 10th Fed Cup, surpassing the US record shared by Billie Jean King and Chris Evert. The three-time Grand Slam singles champion led the United States to Fed Cup titles in 1996, 1999 and 2000, and has

lost just twice in 25 singles matches.

Williams, ranked third in the world, is 6-0 in Fed Cup matches and has yet to lose a set.

"Having the commitments of both Lindsay and Serena, two of the top three players in the world, gives us a great opportunity for success against a potentially dangerous Belgian team," said US Fed Cup captain Zina Garrison.

Garrison expects to select the rest of the team by the middle of March. Belgium captain Ivo Van Aken has until April 13 to pick his squad.

Meanwhile, in Scottsdale, Arizona, Mario Ancic or Wayne Arthurs will get his first ATP Tour victory on Sunday.

Ancic, the No. 4 seed, joined the unseeded Australian Arthurs in the finals with a dominating, 6-1, 6-4, semifinal triumph over defending champion and

No. 3 seed Vincent Spadea on Saturday night.

Earlier, Arthurs, the second-oldest player on the ATP Tour, earned his second career final appearance on Saturday with a 7-5, 7-6 (2), semifinal victory over Christophe Rochus of Belgium in the Tennis Channel Open.

Both will be appearing in their second ATP finals.

Ancic, a lanky 20-year-old potential tour star who will compete for Croatia against the United States in the Davis Cup next week, methodically handled everything Spadea threw at him. Ancic's time seemed to be coming. This was the fourth tournament in a row that he had reached the semifinals.

"I just want to go out there and try to raise my game," he said. "We'll see how it goes."

AP

Kings, Suns fr

New stars fail to save Sixers, I

PHILADELPHIA—Chris Webber failed to convert a last-second layup after grabbing an offensive rebound off an intentionally missed freethrow, spoiling his debut for the Philadelphia 76ers on Saturday night in a 101-99 loss to the Sacramento Kings.

"I told Chris that the rebound was going to come long. Everything happened right," Allen Iverson said. "We just couldn't finish it."

Webber had 16 points, 11 rebounds and three steals in his first game with his new team. Strangely, it came against the team that traded him less than 72 hours earlier.

Webber didn't have the ball in his hands as much as he's accustomed to, but Iverson took care of distributing it by handing out a season-high 14 assists to go with his 27 points.

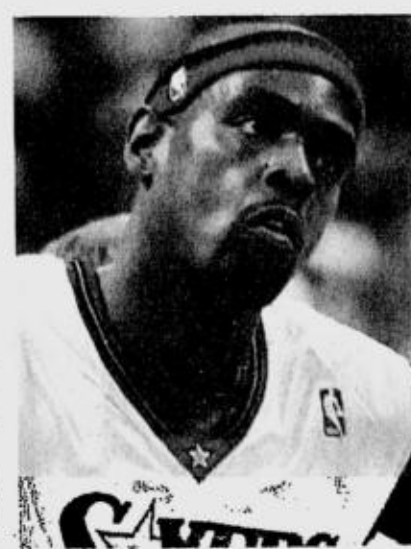
"I'm looking to the challenge to see how we connect," Webber said. "I think it's definitely Allen's team because he's proven to the city, the community and the team what he brings to the table. But I think now it's going to be our team because of the way him and I are going to work together."

Mike Bibby scored 19 points to lead six players in double figures for the Kings.

Webber, wearing a red and black headband and a white "Sixers" jersey, exchanged hugs with all five starters from his former team after receiving a thunderous ovation during introductions from the 76ers' first sellout crowd of the season.

In Dallas, Joe Johnson hit a jump shot with 4.7 seconds left, then Shawn Marion blocked Dirk Nowitzki from behind on a driving layup, giving Phoenix a thrilling 124-123 victory over the Mavericks.

Johnson's jumper over newly acquired Keith Van Horn capped a 7-0 run over the final 1:46. Then Nowitzki appeared headed for the winner when Marion flew in behind him and swatted



WEBBER: Comes up short

AP



VAN HORN: Score

at the ball as the 7-foot German held it over his head. The ball went into the rim and Marion grabbed it, securing the victory and ending Dallas' six-game winning streak, its longest of the season.

Van Horn finished with 10 points in 23 minutes of action.

In Miami, Dwyane Wade scored 14 of his 25 points in the final quarter, and the Heat overcame the absence of Shaquille O'Neal to beat Orlando, 101-98, and avoid its first three-game losing streak of the season.

Wade scored eight straight Miami points down the stretch, first on a pair of tiebreaking jumpers, then with four straight freethrows—the last two giving the Heat a 99-95 lead with 15.8 seconds left.

He also made a crucial block on Steve Francis with 10.2 seconds left.

Eddie Jones had 15 points, Damon Jones added 14 and Michael Doleac and Rasual Butler each had 10 for Miami, which was without O'Neal for essentially a third straight game because of his sprained left knee.

Orlando's Grant Hill led all scorers with 28 points, on 12-of-17 shooting. Francis, who had 31 points in Orlando's last match-up with Miami, missed his first six shots from the field and finished with 16.

In New York, Stephon Marbury scored

21 points to lead

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Jamal Crawford, Kurt Thomas had 10 bounds for the Knic

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Antonio Davis

Toms, DiMarco

CARLSBAD, California—David Toms hit spectacular shots to pull away from Ian Poulter, and Chris DiMarco rallied past US Open champion Retief Goosen to reach the final of the Match Play Championship on Saturday.

Toms made back-to-back eagles by holing out from the 10th fairway and hitting 5-wood into 2 feet on the par-5 11th. Toms, who hit every approach shot within 12 feet over the final eight holes, beat Englishman Poulter 3 and 2 in the semifinals.

DiMarco recovered from an awful start to oust South Africa's Goosen, chipping in for birdie from behind the 14th green for the second time on Saturday and winning 2 and 1.

After 62 matches crammed in over three days, their victories set up an all-American final on Sunday for the fourth consecutive year at La Costa Resort.

Toms and DiMarco will play a

36-hole final wit

the line.

Two-time det

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A pitch for peace in war-torn Mindanao

UNBEKNOWNST to many, successful businessman Andy de Rossi, an Italian national who has adopted the Philippines as his home, has been spearheading several humanitarian projects, including the promotion of sports in war-ravaged Mindanao.

Conferred the title of Sultan in 2002 by the Royal Houses of the Sultanate of Lanao, this well-meaning Italian is a longtime Philippine resident having lived here for the last 30 years. Sultan De Rossi heads the 3P Foundation (Peace and Prosperity for the Philippines Foundation), an organization which conducts humanitarian activities such as medical relief and rescue operations.

Most recently, 3P Foundation led the "Mercy Flyout Mission" for the typhoon victims of Infanta and Real in Quezon province. The 10-day mercy mission was held in cooperation with the US Embassy led by Ambassador Francis Ricciardone, Knightsbridge International headed by Sir Edward Artis and the Philippine Coast Guard 101st Auxiliary Squadron through Commodore Romeo Herman.

Also in 2004, 3P Foundation donated books, diaries, pamphlets, personal computers with printers and a check of

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo



several thousand pesos to former Sen. Santanina Rasul's Kassinangan scholars in Sulu. Sultan De Rossi was accompanied by Ambassador Ricciardone and Australian Ambassador Ruth Pearce. Providing the added support were the Sultan's Filipino friends among them, Boboy Virata and Lt. Gen. Alberto Braganza, who handled logistics and transports needs.

Late last year, 3P Foundation also initiated "A Pitch for Peace" program aimed at getting the children of Mindanao into sports by teaching them the fundamentals of baseball and dividing them into Little League teams. Though Little League baseball does not promise instant fame or fortune, the sport nevertheless offers the reward of a lifetime focused on sportsmanship, discipline and fair play.

In many ways, this baseball program will bridge the gap between these

young people from diverse backgrounds, between the children of rebels and civilians, both Muslim and Christian.

"We hope to bring back the smiles to the faces of these children who are caught in the crossfire, help them get into sports and meet new friends as well," said Sultan De Rossi, who is the treasurer of the Philippine Little League Board and a reserved captain in the Philippine Coast Guard 101st Wing Squadron.

A highlight of the affair was the turnover ceremony at Camp Aguinaldo where Sir Edward Artis gave Little League baseball equipment, hospital beds, crutches, and medical supplies to Sultan De Rossi and Datu Ibrahim Paglas of Maguindanao.

EMPIRE KING STRIKES BACK. Considered by racing aficionados as a worthy successor to super horse Wind Blown, 4-year-old Empire King won with aplomb the 2005 Freedom Cup race, beating arch rival Cover Girl at the San Lazaro Leisure Park on Friday.

Owned by David Lee, Empire King, ridden by regular jockey Jeffrey Ladi-ana, got back at Cover Girl who had beaten him at the same venue just two weeks ago, winning the 1,750-meter

race this time around by one full length. "Nabawi rin kay Cover Girl (We got back at Cover Girl at last)," said Ladi-ana, who also piloted Empire King to victory in the 1,800-m Philracom Open Stakes race at his favorite Santa Ana Park oval only a week ago.

The victory was worth P450,000 for Empire King (Perfect Halo-Carta Nueve by El Gran Señor) while Cover Girl, with jockey Jonathan Hernandez on top, earned P168,750. It was also Empire King's 12th win in 20 starts thus far.

A mainstay of the Lee stable, Empire King belongs to a family of stakes winners. He is a full brother to the fabled Baccarat and a half brother to undisputed sprint champion but ill-fated Arriba King, who was recently tested positive to the EIA virus.

Empire King's speed, endurance and versatility on the track may have come from his excellent inbreeding. Empire King's sire line Halo through his sire Perfect Halo is beyond question since this line has produced many great horses, including Japanese famous stallion Sunday Silence, Jolie's Halo, Devil's Bag and Southern Halo. His versatility may have also come from his inbreeding to the great matriarch Almahmoud through his grand sire Halo and dam sire Northern Dancer.



RECORD ARTIST: Yelena Isinbayeva of Russia clears 4.89 meters for a new indoor World record during the indoor athletics meeting in France. The 22-year-old has set three indoor world records this season.

Frustrate rivals

Mavs



es 10 points AP

the Knicks over Indi-
second straight victo-

added 17 points, and
points and seven re-
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first time since Herb
as coach following
ignation in late Jan-

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5 11th, Toms hit
at stopped 2 feet

was 3 up against
ed for the finals
ne in three years.

Toms lost to Woods two years ago,
but he has never felt this good
about his game.

And he'll certainly hang onto
that 5-wood, the same club he used
to made an ace in the third round of
the 2001 PGA Championship,
which he won by one shot over
Mickelson.

"I can't seem to find one I can hit
any better," Toms said.

DiMarco's victory seemed un-
likely after he lost the first three
holes to Goosen, and stood over a
6-foot par putt on the fifth hole to
keep the deficit from getting any
worse.

But Goosen lost a ball in the tree,
and DiMarco found his groove on
the back nine with four birdies in
five holes to pull away. Just when it
looked as though he might give
back the lead, DiMarco made a 10-
foot par putt on the 17th hole, and
Goosen three-putted for bogey,
missing a 3-footer to end the
match.



TOMS: Spectacular shots

REUTERS

O'Neal feared career was over after nasty fall

MIAMI—NBA star Shaquille O'Neal feared he'd never play again while he lay on the court in Chicago, grasping at his left knee and wincing from pain.

O'Neal leaped for an alley-oop pass from Miami Heat teammate Dwyane Wade early in Tuesday night's game, a seemingly innocent play. Yet the 7-foot-1 (2.16-meter), 325-pound (147-kilo-gram) behemoth landed awkwardly, toppled over Chicago Bulls forward Othella Harrington—and immediately knew something was wrong.

"It didn't feel right when I landed," O'Neal said Saturday, speaking in depth about the injury for the first time with reporters. "I thought it was over."

"I've always had fears of ending my career like that," O'Neal added. "As a youngster, when I'd talk to certain people and they would try to motivate us to go to school, the first thing they'd always say was 'What are you going to do when you blow your knee out?' I've always had fears of coming down freakily like that."

Fortunately for the 12-time All-Star, it turned out to be only a mild sprain, one that likely won't have him sidelined too much longer. O'Neal missed essentially his third straight game Saturday, and watched in a suit as the Heat beat the Orlando Magic, 101-98.

O'Neal wore only a flexible blue brace over the knee before Saturday's game and walked around the locker room without a noticeable limp. He said there's a slim chance that he'll play in Orlando when the teams complete a weekend series Sunday.

All he would say publicly in recent days was that the knee felt "good," and teammates said he immediately professed that the injury wasn't too serious. Yet on Saturday, O'Neal indicated those words may have been tinged with a bit of bravado.

O'Neal is averaging 22.7 points, 10.4 rebounds and 2.5 blocks this season, and has an NBA-leading field-goal percentage of 59.9.

He was injured less than two minutes into the Bulls' game, did not return and didn't suit up for Miami's game in Indiana on Wednesday. Miami lost both games in overtime.

"People think we can't win without Shaq," said Wade, who had 25 points in Saturday's victory. "We wanted to show we're a good team."

Against Orlando, Michael Doleac started at center for the Heat and scored 10 points.

"I think that people are figuring out that, obviously, we're not nearly as good without him, but we're not just totally going to fall apart," Heat coach Stan Van Gundy said. AP

PMI flashes mean form, routs Acsat

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DUMAGUETE CITY—Defending champion Philippine Maritime Institute lost its top gunner but still came out with plenty of firepower to destroy Asian College of Science and Technology (Acsat)-Dumaguete, 89-54, yesterday at the start of the National Students Championships here.

With last year's Most Valuable Player Niño Marquez opting to ride the bench as an assistant coach, the Admirals didn't take chances against the host Wildcats, who failed to get into the groove despite the cheers from the gallery at the Lamberto Macias Sports Center gym.

Bohol Institute of Technology also joined the early winners with a similar blow-out of Cagayan College-Tuguegarao, 115-93.

In juniors action, Sacred Heart of Jesus Montessori beat University Foundation High, 62-55.

In other inaugural seniors games held at the Foundation University, University of Northeastern Philippines bested Pilgrim Cultural College, 70-66, while Acsat-Cagayan de Oro drubbed guest team National University, 92-73.

PMI used its height, speed and hard work to massacre Acsat, unleashing full-court presses even when leading by more than 30

points. The Admirals tore the game wide open, leading by as many as 39 points late in the fourth on a fastbreak layup by 6-foot-2 forward Bimbo Dimagiba.

"We still lacked defense," said PMI coach Diosdado Santiago, who picked NCR teams University of Santo Tomas and University of Perpetual Help-Dalatas as the teams to watch. "We had a good game today but I know that things will be harder from now on."

The 59-year-old tournament, backed this year by Molten and Accel, is being held here for the first time. It will be played on three different venues starting today.

The Scores:
First game
PMI 89—Dimagiba 19, Rodriguez 18, C. Stalaria 15, M. Castillo 8, J. Santamaria 7, R. Castillo 6, Herrera 5, Calimbang 4, Luto 4, Villanueva 1, Fernandez 1.
ACSAT-DUMAGUETE 54—Burgos 14, Eltanal 8, Gana-an, Lumaya 4, Villiran 4, Abejero 4, Oullaquis 4, Recla 4, Casil 4, Jabaybay 2, Molina 2.
Quarters: 24-14, 46-26, 69-43, 89-54
Second Game
BIT 115—Mapalit 26, Torino 20, Timim 18, Guidex 14, Damayo 13, Quibol 11, Dojasco 6, Sansot 5, Lusdos 2, Nisnuan 0, Miranda 0, Anabeza 0.
CCT 93—Herrera 31, Tuppil 23, Enciso 13, Ferrer 12, Verbo 6, Malanay 5, Buraga 0, Pagarán 0, Aggarao 0, Damil 0.
Quarters: 18-10, 35-25, 56-46, 115-93.

NCR, Visayas enter semis

THE NATIONAL Capital Region, Visayas and Calabarzon topped their respective divisions Saturday to barge into the semifinals of the 3rd WNCAA National Championship Games in Legazpi City.

NCR swept all three games of Group A in the volleyball eliminations to arrange a semifinal showdown with the Cordillera Autonomous Region, the second placer in Group B.

The other volleyball semis match pits Group A second placer Mindanao against Group B top-notch Visayas, which likewise swept the elims.

In basketball, the semis pairings are Visayas versus Central Luzon and NCR-A against Calabarzon, winner of all three Group B basketball matches.

Winners advance to the finals.

The WNCAA 35th season and the 3rd WNCAA National Championship Games are co-presented by Kotex and sponsored by adidas, The Philippine Star, RPN 9, Monster Radio RX 93.1, Pantene and Café Lupe, in cooperation with Cadbury, Goldilocks, Molten, Mikasa, Citibank and Discovery Spa.

NCR-A's second win in the elims came at the expense of Visayas, 55-49, Saturday afternoon while Calabarzon's third victory in as many games was posted over Central Luzon, 53-40.

John Hay to host Corporate Cup

A LONG summer for golf starts early at the Camp John Hay as its holds the 17th Philippine Corporate Cup golf championship presented by Smart Communications on March 8-10.

The toumey is expected to draw no less than 50 four-man teams which will vie for honors in five divisions according to average handicap and age.

Teams will be classified according to the average handicap indices of its best three players and the categories will be as follows: Group I for 5-9.9, Group II for 10-13.99, Group III for 14-18.99 and Group IV for 19 and above. There will be a separate competition for seniors aged 55 years and above.

The Philippine Corporate Cup Foundation Inc. is turning over the management of the long-running event to Club Leisure Corp. starting this year.

Cecil Hechanova, the man who conceptualized the event that has become an annual gathering of top corporations, said he believes Club Leisure has the network and resources to attain the goals he had set for the Corporate Cup.

"The Corporate Cup has found a permanent home which is Camp John Hay and I feel that as it nears its 20th year, Club Leisure is capable of steering it to a brighter future," said Hechanova.



CECIL Hechanova (left) and Bob Sobrepena seal the turnover of the Corporate Cup to Camp John Hay Leisure Corp.

Robert John Sobrepena, chair of the board of Camp John Hay, said the Corporate Cup serves as a perfect partner to the Fil-Am championships they host every year.

"The Corporate Cup has survived the test of time and we feel that it can really become a major event not just for the local corporate sector but also for the vacationing golfers from all over the world," Sobrepena said.

A free practice round and the welcome cocktails are scheduled on March 8. For inquiries, call the Camp John Hay

offices in Manila 687-6607 and Baguio 074-446-0231.

The Molave system of scoring will be used with a double-eagle worth seven points, hole-in-one 6, eagle 5, birdie 4, par 3, bogey 2 and double-bogey 1 with the best three scores counting each day.

Trophies will be awarded to the top two teams per group with the highest point total after 36 holes. The overall individual champions and individual winners per group as well as the top three senior teams and top three senior individuals will also win trophies.

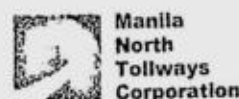
Ngayon,
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The EC Tag
at the North Luzon Expressway.
Your electronic toll payment system
to the North.

Laking ginawa dahil iwas pila ka na.
FREE with Direct Link
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Simpleng Kausap!

SPORTS

Ramirez bags silver in Artistic Gymnastics World Cup

By Jasmine W. Payo

THERE was no fuss when the Philippine gymnastics delegation left last week to compete in the United States.

But Roel Ramirez certainly got the attention of the gymnastics world when he bagged a silver medal in the men's vault to become the first ever Filipino to win in the

Artistic Gymnastics World Cup yesterday in Uniondale, New York.

The 24-year-old Ramirez, who scored 9.31 in the finals, missed the gold by 0.15 point to Netherland's Jeffrey Wammes (9.46).

"The finals included gymnasts who competed in the last Athens Olympics," said Gymnastics Association of the Philip-

pines president Noel Buenaventura. "So we can say that a Filipino broke the dominance of the Western gymnasts in this apparatus."

"This makes Roel a cinch for a gold in the team's preparation for the SEA Games," added Buenaventura.

Ramirez, a gold medalist in the 2003 Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam, edged

Luis Rivera of Puerto Rico (9.20), Pablo Capote of Venezuela (9.20) and Christos Lymanovnos of Greece (9.07).

The Netherlands and the United States dominated the two-day tournament.

Wammes also secured a gold-medal finish in the floor exercises (9.22). His teammate Yuri Van Gelder topped the still rings (9.75); USA's Alexander Artemev in the

pommel horse (9.36) and Japan's Kazuya Veda in the parallel bars (9.58).

Ramirez, a Muntinlupa City resident, is a sophomore student of the University of the East.

The Philippine delegation included Ramirez's brothers Roel and Al, Brydon Sy, Tami de Guzman, head coach Sonny Ty and assistant coach Robin Padiz.



PRESIDENT Arroyo shares a light moment with Stella Diaz, 42-K women's champion. At right is Bernardo Desamito Jr., the men's champion.

Desamito rules 42K

By Jasmine W. Payo

LUCK ran out on him the past five years.

But Bernardo Desamito Jr.'s fortunes finally changed yesterday when he ruled the Philippine Marathon for the Pasig River that wound up at The Fort in Taguig City.

"I've been jobless," said Desamito in Filipino, after topping the grueling 42-kilometer run in 2 hours, 39 minutes and 33 seconds to win the P100,000 cash prize. "This is the biggest win of my career."

Stella Diaz, a 33-year-old housewife from Davao, led the women's category at 3:08:10 to bag the P75,000 prize.

The lean, 30-year-old Desamito, who bested a

713-strong field, started to pull away in the 10-km mark along C-5 road.

He trailed in the first half of the race, but found his pace in the final 21-km stretch.

"I was already having a difficult time in the last two kilometers," said the Occidental Mindoro native. "Up and down kasi 'yung trail."

Desamito, a national team member from 1996 to 1998, clocked almost a minute ahead of Jaime Canillo of the Makati Global Running Club (2:40:23). Adonis Lobaton of the Philippine Army took third place at 2:40:47.

Defending champion Roy Vence, who's gearing up for the Boston Marathon in April, did not join the tournament that saw 10,635 participants.

It was only Desamito's third full marathon competition. But among his career highlights was competing in the steeple chase event in the 1997 Southeast Asian Games in Jakarta, Indonesia.

As much as he loves running, however, life as a full-time athlete wasn't financially rewarding for Desamito.

After joining the Florida cross-country tournament in 1999, Desamito risked becoming an illegal alien in the United States. He later found a job in New Jersey where he labored as a factory worker in a packaging warehouse.

Desamito, though, decided to set things right by coming home in 2003. He started competing again, and last November, he finished ninth place in the Milo Marathon.

Mike Keon to Malacañang?

IT was never easy to like Michael Keon.

Not only because of his affinity with the biggest crook this country has produced.

A lot of people hated Keon's guts. Because he called a spade a spade.

No ifs, no buts. He just slammed it as brutally as a grizzled executioner would.

Well, Keon, now 50, did not mete out the death penalty.

But he stole the scene just when all the major players were looking the other way.

The guy who used to rule Philippine sports with a firm if often nasty hand announced the country did not have a shot at the overall championship of the Southeast Asian Games.

That lightning bolt of a statement did send shock waves from the overpriced dustbins at the Philippine Sports Commission all the way to Malacañang.

The great thing about this scathing assessment was that Keon did it as sincerely, as frankly as he could.

Nothing new there. It was vintage Keon all over again.

He spoke as freely, fearlessly as he would at 24, when he was concurrently the president of the Philippine Olympic Committee and Gintong Alay project director.

Keon today is the national training director for our athletes to this year's SEA Games.

Beth Celis has reported that the guy has "gained weight, his gray strands have turned to silver."

To complete the picture, Ms Celis said Keon's blood pressure has shot up.

You can bet Keon's head-turning statement sent the BPs of affected sports officials boiling.

But Keon did not speak out the truth in order to grandstand.

He just spelled in bold, stunning letters the stark state of Philippine sports.

Keon said RP would be lucky to steal third overall in this year's SEA Games the country will be hosting.

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad



To back his stand, Keon pointed to the perennial ills.

Things that have been promised remained just like that: old, unfulfilled promises.

Nothing has materialized, so far.

Our national athletes have yet to start their international training and exposure.

Look, if he had said that, say, in the run-off to last year's Athens Olympics, it would have amounted to sacrilege.

Why? Because Eric Buhain, the deposed PSC head, had insisted that God's power, prayers in particular, would help our poorly prepared athletes win RP's first Olympic gold medal.

Don't know how Sir Eric, who even lectured on proper (?) sports management before he left, felt about the assessment of Buhain's legacy of ills at the PSC.

Keon just made it clear that not even all the prayers in this Catholic country would help if athletes don't get the help they needed.

That was the brutal truth. As could be expected, there next came efforts to deodorize the sordid national sporting scene.

Reported the Bulletin's Nick Giongco on Friday: "Despite the dismal picture painted by national training director (Mike) Keon on the country's campaign in this year's SEA Games, a key official yesterday expressed the opinion that winning the overall crown remains a possibility."

That statement was attributed to Joey Romasanta, one-time sports czar who now heads the media affairs of the Philippine

Olympic Committee.

"It's his opinion," said Romasanta of Keon's view.

Just an opinion. But between Romasanta's limp defense and Keon's straight statement, which would you heed?

At least, in Keon's case, it was very clear he was not trying to talk sales.

He was not soliciting sponsorship.

He was frankly sending out a warning. A wake-up call, no matter how late.

For the record, the Philippines garnered a total of 91 gold medals to miss the overall championship by one gold (behind Indonesia) when the country last hosted the SEA Games in 1991.

Keon was also not about to fuel a national delusion.

Unlike in that so-called Miracle of '91, RP will have to surpass defending overall champion Vietnam and perennial power Thailand if it hopes to finally make it to the top.

Vietnam's newfound might, fully bared when it hosted the Games two years ago, can be expected to be intact.

Thailand, on the other hand, is not about to let the Olympic glory it has fully achieved in Athens be tainted by a dismal show in Manila later this year.

You see, it's easy to liken our sporting picture to the general state of things hereabouts.

Drumbeaters, together with big-eared, trusted palace clowns, continue to paint a picture of a growing economy.

The brutal truth though is that, despite the glorious accounting on the front pages, the poor *masa* continues to languish in the slur of record poverty.

At least, we should be thankful that, in the case of RP sports, there was one believable man to provide the true picture.

Michael Keon could indeed feel like a terrible toothache to affected parties.

But Malacañang may have to use more people of his daring and sincerity to get the real score.

SPORTSWATCH

Danila, Borja rule national swim tryout

SAN PABLO CITY, Laguna—Asean veteran Michaelmars Danila and 11-year-old Banjo Borja showed supremacy in the opening day of the second Speedo-Philippine Amateur Swimming Association national tryout on Friday here at the Lake City pool complex. Danila, 16, reached the 15-17 age-group qualifying time of 1:02.18 by registering 1:02.13 in the men's 100-meter backstroke to become the first age-group national qualifier in the second tryout. Kendrick Uy of PCA took second place with a time of 1:07.75, while SPMST's Meggyver Reyes settled for third in 1:10.69. Borja timed 1:10.91 in the 100-meter backstroke 11-12-year-old class, beating the standard time 1:10.92. The event, sponsored by Speedo and organized by Pasa president Monchillo Ilagan, will serve as a qualifying meet for the 2005 SEAG.

Largahan 5-cock begins today

A TOTAL of 104 fights will spice up the second round of eliminations of Largahan 5-Cock Derby which will start at 4 p.m. today at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. The four-day event being hosted by Roligon owner Rolly Ligon stakes a guaranteed prize of P1.5 million. An imported Toyota 4x4 Surf will go to the fastest kill champion. Entry fee is P4,400. Eighty-three participants saw action in last Saturday's opening round, bringing the number of entries to 187. Those joining the final round on Wednesday must submit their entries tomorrow from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Meanwhile, the fourth leg of the Filipino Cockers and Breeders Association (FilcoBRA) 4-Cock Derby is slated on March 12, with P300,000 at stake. Derby hosts are Jerry Ang, Peter Uren, Jimmy Machuda and Dado Mitra. Wild na Wild (Philip Chlongbrian and Edmund Yasay), Lista Na JU and AS Alpha Siera of ASF Group topped the third leg on Feb. 16. Contact 8332275, 8331638 and 8529812 for details.

Antonio, Lasala extend win streak

PATRICK Antonio and Tony Lasala of Laguna extended their winning streak at Las Piñas Coliseum by topping the fourth leg of the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 7-Cock Derby last Wednesday. Fresh from winning the NCA derby title at Araneta Coliseum, Antonio snared his second derby championship this year after his entry, Complexor 3000, posted six wins and one loss. Lasala's NML SP tallied the same score. The GCAP derby fifth leg is scheduled on March 14 and 16. Also awaited at Las Piñas Coliseum is the 330K Big Event 6-Cock Derby on April 9. Antonio said all the participants will host this event. The GCAP is also set to stage its first ever International 8-Cock Derby on June 6, 8 and 11.



FREEDOM CUP RACE: Jules Roxas, owner of Empire King, receives the Freedom Cup Race championship trophy from PCSO chair Sergio Valencia Saturday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park. With them are Philracom chair Jimmy Dilag and GAB chair Eric Buhain.

JOSEPH AGCAOLI

Suelo heads Tanauan active chess bets

FORMER national junior champion Roberto Suelo Jr. leads a talented bunch of national masters chasing the top prize of P100,000 in the 1st Tanauan Chess Open-Mayor's Cup which gets under way at 9 a.m. on March 4 at the Speaker Jose Laurel Memorial Gymnasium (Gym 2, back of City Hall) in Tanauan City, Batangas. Suelo, who finished second to Grandmaster Eugene Torre in last year's Leyte Open, is joined by national masters Efrén Bagamasbad, Darwin Laylo, Quirino Sagario, John Paul Gomez, Emmanuel Senador, Oliver Barbosa, Rolando Nolte, Jerry Nodado, Prospero Cruz, Roland Perez, Mirabeau Maga, Alex Milagrosa, Elwin Retanal, Bob Jones Liwag, Nicomedes Alisangco, Elias Lao, Rudy Ibañez and Andrew Vazquez. The champion receives P100,000 plus trophy. The second placer gets P40,000; third, P20,000; fourth, P10,000; fifth, P5,000; 6th-10th, P2,000 each; and 11th-20th, P1,000 each. A registration fee of P750 and a default fee of P250 will be charged each participant. Registration is being accepted at the First Asia Institute, #2 President Laurel Highway, Tanauan City, Batangas with tels. (043) 778-0656 and 778-1529 loc. 106 (Daniel Darusin) or at the Acca (Susan Manalo), sixth floor PDCP Bank Center, Leviste corner Rufino Streets, Salcedo Village, Makati City or contact 0917-4803674 and 0918-6966581; e-mail: acca@info.com.ph.

Gymnastics coach tops judging course

COACH Normita "Butch" Ty, of the national women's rhythmic gymnastics team, topped the 11th Cycle Rhythmic international judging course held recently at the Bayview Hotel Manila. She scored 9.00 out of a possible 10.00. The local passers include Selma Sanz Tibon of Caraga Region; Digna Manalo of Region III-Bulacan; Mariwil Arban, Region IV-Mindoro; Marilyn Bagabagon, Region IV-Laguna; Jovelyn Digo, CAR-Bagui City; May Castillo, Region VI-Bacolod City; Salvacion Flores, Region I-La Union; Marielana Angeles, Region XII-Cotabato City; Cleofe Oliveros, NCR-Malabon and Edior Costales, Region III-San Jose Del Monte City. Indonesians Darnela Linda, Safitri Helen and Indriani Fenty also passed.

Norbert/Relli top SLGSDA First Gentleman Cup show

FAVORITE Norbert Vier Hundert Hertz 2003-2004 Philippine Sieger captured the coveted VI-Sieger title while Tex Vom Naturpark-Altmualt finished a close second for the Vice Sieger title in the recent First Gentleman Cup II/7th SLGSDA Landesgruppen Sieger show at the Filiinvest Alabang grounds in Muntinlupa City.

First pick of SV German judge Herr Wilhelm Nordsieck, the three-year-old German dog was handled by Erwin Tamayo.

The open female class was won by dark horse Relli Fixtrutta expertly handled by trainer Roel Magundayao. Relli romped off with the VI Siegerin title at the expense of second placer Ulav V Sumico and third placer Usis Vom Monchberg.

"Tip-top conditioning, anatomy, and movement spelled the difference," said SV-German judge Wilhelm Nordsieck.

"Our German Shepherd standard of quality has vastly improved during the last five years. 'The level of competition

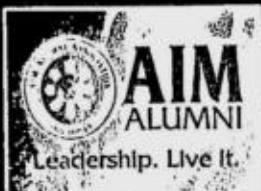
is at par with Malaysia and Indonesia," SLGSDA chair Edrich Cabrera said.

Xeres dela Carlotta was awarded SLGSDA Dog of the Year while Usis Vom Monchberg won the bitch of the year for 2003 award.

The event was sponsored by Pagcor, Smart, Eukanuba, Gardenia, Thunderbird Feeds, The Palms Country Club, Filiinvest Alabang, Rhino Brand Leaf Tea, Mister Donut, Timberland, Councilor Espeleta, Happy Dog and Mondrian Properties.



WINNING dogs and their trainers during the awarding ceremonies. Inset is Bebot Lao, who received the trophy for Usis Vom Monchberg, the SLGSDA bitch of the year for 2003.



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SPORTS

Django, Alex restore pool order

THE EARLY exit of Efren "Bata" Reyes from the tournament featuring the top local cue artists in the country supposedly threw the event into a wide open race.

But former World No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante and reigning world pool titlist Alex Pagulayan restored order to the contest, forging a finals showdown between the remaining fa-

vorites in the Hope P1-million All-Filipino Billiards Open.

The finals was being played at presstime, with Bustamante and Pagulayan reaching the championship via different routes.

Bustamante, the only other Filipino player whose name is mentioned in the same breath as Reyes, swept through the field to reach the championship undefeated.

But through it all, Bustamante always credited his victory to one thing.

"I just got lucky," said the Tarlac native.

In the semifinals, Bustamante overcame a foul-ridden break to overwhelm Gandy Valle, 11-4.

Pagulayan, who led against Bustamante in their first meeting in this tournament that offers a P500,000 top prize only to lose steam in an 8-9 defeat, had to claw back from the loser's bracket to get this far.

In the semifinals, Pagulayan ditched Antonio Gabica, 11-6, to set a rematch against Bustamante.

"[Against Django], I had a good lead and let it slip away. I learned

my lesson well," Pagulayan said.

Pagulayan nearly succumbed to another collapse. Leading, 8-2, the Filipino-Canadian watched Gabica string up four straight games to move within two frames of the lead.

But the alternate break format worked to Pagulayan's favor as he cooled Gabica's rally, scoring on his opponent's break and sinking three balls off his own before running off the 17th frame to seal the victory.

"The alternate-break format worked to my favor," said Pagulayan in Filipino. "Even when Gabica (Gabica) rallied to 8-6, I was still confident because I would have a chance to break."

The week-long tournament, backed by Hope, More, Mark, Champion, Fortune, Talk 'N Text, Emperador Brandy, Motolite and Café Puro, offers P200,000 to the runner-up and P50,000 each to the losing semifinalist.

The event is organized by billiards patron Aristeo "Putch" Puyat and Jemah Television president Marc Rocas under tournament director Rolando Vicente.



BUSTAMANTE: I just got lucky.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PUYAT SPORTS

Filipino legend and US-based Jose "Amang" Parica won this event the last time it was held in 1992 at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium

in Manila. Parica nipped Eduardo Villanueva, 15-14, for the P200,000 champion's purse. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*



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Speed Advantage beats Euro Bucks

By Edwin Villanueva, Contributor

SPEED Advantage lost via disqualification the last time he met Euro Bucks prior to the running of the "2005 Road to the Triple Crown."

Yesterday, Speed Advantage made amends and beat Euro Bucks fairly and squarely in the opening leg of the series at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

Under the skillful handling of veteran Antonio Alcasid Jr., Speed Advantage held off Euro Bucks down the stretch to prevail by half a length in the 1,600-meter race.

"Maraming marami pa (he still has speed in reserve) but I think there's still much room for him to improve," said Alcasid on the 3-year-old bay colt sired by Royal Premiere out of Trudy Capote.

Alcasid was assigned to ride Speed Advantage in place of Fernando Raquel Jr., who got suspended for foul riding when Speed Advantage was disqualified and Euro Bucks declared the winner in their Feb. 2 meeting at Santa Ana.

As his coupled bet Speed Majesty took off like a bullet train to dictate the pace, Speed Advantage simply watched from third spot while Euro Bucks of the Esguerra Stable worked his way from fifth spot under Pat Dilema.

Speed Advantage blew by Speed Majesty nearing the home turn and it was at this point where Euro Bucks threw in his challenge to the delight of the huge Sunday afternoon crowd.

Save for the disqualification, it could have been the 10th straight victory for the Yutadco Stable-owned, Mario dela Paz-trained

Speed Advantage, who captured the top prize of P450,000.

"Kundisyon talaga siya (He's really in good condition)," said de la Paz, who still picked the idle Real Spicy as their biggest rival in the coming Triple Crown hostilities.

Speed Advantage, who ran as co-favorite with Speed Majesty, clocked a fast 1:41 flat (23-24-26-28).

Thywillbedone arrived third, five lengths off the winner, then came In Command, Montezuma, Smokin' Red, Top of D'Line, Cool Mount, Speed Majesty, Joint Account, Ilocos Pride and Harrod's Magic.

Actually, Joint Account tried to play rabbit for Euro Bucks but could not match the nimble-footed Speed Majesty whose sacrifice, in turn, benefited Speed Advantage.

Speed Majesty, who has the distinction of defeating Real Spicy twice last year, built as much as a five-length lead over Joint Account but Dominador Borbe Jr.'s mount tired out at the far turn even as Speed Advantage put in his claim.

"I think bubuti pa siya. Parang naglalaro lang pagpasok namin ng rekta kaya panay ang palo ko (I think he can be better. He seems to be playing when we reached the stretch that's why I kept on whipping him)," Alcasid said of Speed Advantage.

Euro Bucks also came under heavy punishment from Dilema but Speed Advantage proved a tough nut to crack.

The third placer in the 2004 Juvenile Championship won by Real Spicy, Euro Bucks got P168,750. Thywillbedone received P93,750, and In Command settled for P37,500.

Pinoy archers strike 4 golds in Bangkok

BANGKOK—Filipino archers struck hard on the second day of the 2005 1st Asian Grand Prix Saturday, winning six medals, including four golds, in the compound division at Huamark field here.

Amaya Paz, a 19-year-old UP Psychology scholar, led the Filipinos' charge together with veteran Raul Arambulo.

Paz nipped Sydney Olympian Jennifer Chan, 111-110, to bag the individual gold. She also took a gold in the qualifying round, shared the women's team gold with Chan and many-time Southeast Asian Games winner

Joann Tabanag and reset her own record in the Fita 70-meter distance.

Paz tallied 675 points to improve by one point the mark she set in the third leg of the Asian GP in Hanoi, Vietnam, in November 2003, when the RP women's archers also sparked with four golds, two silvers and one bronze.

Arambulo captured the men's individual gold medal by beating Myanmar's Myo Aung San, 113-109.

In addition to her runner-up finish in the individual Olympic Round, Chan also snatched a bronze in the qualifying round.

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Editor Louie C. Camino
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Who's getting paid to wear what to the Oscars?

LOS ANGELES—The big question in Hollywood fashion circles ahead of this Sunday's Oscars is not just who is wearing what, but who's getting paid to wear what?

For years designers have courted nominees and presenters to wear their dresses and jewels, lending or handing out luxury goods in the hope of basking in the reflected glory of a win or at least being seen by hundreds of millions of viewers.

But this year a few have gone a step further, according to industry sources. Newspaper reports of six-figure payments go hand in hand with hyper-inflation in gift bags, as celebrities pick up thousands of dollars worth of jewelry, travel, clothes and other goodies at luxury suites around Los Angeles.

Ultimate showoff

"Everybody wants to associate their brand with a star. To what extent they'll go to do that is what's changing in Hollywood," said Carol Brodie, global director of communications for jewelry house Harry Winston.

"It used to be they would send flowers. Then they took these huge suites and they gave their product away... then companies paid stars," Brodie said. "For many companies, a celebrity is the ultimate product placement opportunity."

A determined celebrity, especially an Oscar nominee, can probably pull together close to \$1 million in gifts and prizes in the week before the show, industry experts say.

The gift bag given by products placement and marketing firm Distinctive Assets for just the non-winning nominees in the six major Oscar categories is worth \$43,316.95.

Jewelry designer Chopard is frequently named as leading the way in terms of signing up stars to wear its



PRODUCTION staff blow-dries an Oscar on the red carpet Saturday. AP

gems, though company spokesperson Stephanie Labeille declined to comment on reports of such direct payments.

There is no law against endorsements but the romance of the Oscars owes much to the notion of an old-fashioned freedom from the commercial pressures that normally rule show business.

Hilary Swank, star of Best Picture nominee "Million Dollar Baby," raised eyebrows by wearing Chopard to the Golden Globes and several other events this year and declaring: "I'm so glad that I wore Chopard earrings, they brought me good luck."

Six-figure deals?

"I've heard Chopard pays people and their deals are for six figures," said one industry source.

"The jewelry houses are trying to associate a star or a kind of star with their brand, just like the dress designers have," the source said. "People make deals all the time."

Penelope Cruz models for Ralph Lau-



THE GREEN room where presenters and performers will await their cue. AP

ren then wears Ralph Lauren all the time. Now it's Scarlett Johansson and Calvin Klein.

"So, Chopard and other jewelry designers paying celebs so their brand is associated with a particular kind of actress is the same thing," she said.

Swank had been in discussions to wear diamonds by Harry Winston at the Golden Globes, but pulled out at the last minute in what Women's Wear Daily said was the result of a deal.

Harry Winston's Brodie declined to comment on Swank except to confirm she had a fitting before the Golden Globes.

In order to maintain its exclusivity, Brodie said, Harry Winston will be lending jewels to only three or four stars, all existing customers who have a relationship with the house.

Greg Kwiat of Kwiat Diamonds, which have been worn by Halle Berry and Sharon Stone, also rejects the idea of payments.

"We know of the practice," he said. "We certainly hear about it working with stylists and celebrities. But it's not something we do. We make beautiful jewelry and we want it to stand on its own."

But the industry source said other jewelers were being drawn into paying, a practice not so different from product endorsements that cost designers millions of dollars—whether it be Robert de Niro lending his name to American Express, or Nicole Kidman filming a commercial for Chanel No. 5 perfume.

No contest

"There's no way to compete unless you throw them money and free product. Celebs are getting both money and product, absolutely. Wouldn't you if you were a star? How could you resist?" the source said.

The Los Angeles Times reported this week that some payments to stars were as much as \$250,000, though lesser amounts and donations to a favored charity were also common.

But even if you don't get paid for wearing someone's jewelry, you can get "gifted" just for dropping by. Those lucky enough to get an invitation to luxury shoe designer Stuart Weitzman's Oscars dinner received a gift bag worth \$1,000 and that was just one party in a week of parties and fashion showings leading up to the Academy Awards.

For years, designers have courted nominees and presenters. Now, newspapers report six-figure deals between stars and jewelry makers



A \$1 MILLION diamond cluster bracelet, \$900,000 diamond ring and \$550,000 diamond headband from The House of Harry Winston Oscar collection. REUTERS

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Cate Blanchett expected to be today's style icon

LOS ANGELES—Best Actress nominee Hilary Swank, star of "Million Dollar Baby," may be among the most eagerly awaited stars on the red carpet, but Cate Blanchett, who plays Katharine Hepburn in "The Aviator," will be the style icon of the day, fashion experts and stylists say.

"There's going to be that old Hollywood, classic, traditional look," said Joe Zee, editor of Vitals Man and Vitals Woman magazines and a former fashion director of W magazine.

"Being the movie that took the most nominations, it's set the mood for what this is about," Zee said, noting the 11 nominations for Martin Scorsese's biopic about film mogul and aviation pioneer Howard Hughes in the 1930s and 1940s.

Blanchett, who missed out on an Oscar when she was nominated in 1999 for the film "Elizabeth," will be wearing a pair of gloves that belonged to Hepburn, hoping they bring her luck with this year's nomination for best supporting actress.

The rest of her outfit remains a secret. Reuters

'AI' finalists rapped for playing it safe

LAST week on "American Idol," the singing tilt's male and female finalists started the semifinal elimination round that will soon whittle their number down to the final 12.

The 12 male semifinalists were the first to compete with each other, by way of brief solo numbers that enable viewers to evaluate them in relation to each other. Each week, the two singers who get the least number of text votes from viewers will be dropped, until only six are left.

The male survivors turned out to be uniformly good singers, so the deciding factors appear to be their relative good looks, charisma, astute choice of songs, and dynamic projection.

On point of looks, most of the 12 guys were handsome hunks. There was only one chubby man in the bunch, and it didn't look like he would duplicate the feat of portly Ruben Studdard, who won the "American Idol" title two years ago.

Choice of songs turned out to be a major sticking point, because the

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre



judges felt that many of the male singers selected musical numbers that didn't showcase them at their best. Thus, contestants need to know how to objectively analyze their strongest and weakest suits as performers, so they can more judiciously choose songs that will highlight their strengths rather than expose their weaknesses.

Even more tellingly, the judges chastised a number of the male singers for not taking risks in terms of performance style. They played it vocally safe, so their numbers failed to sizzle and blandly blended in with the other singers' renditions.

Instructively, only four male singers were given unreservedly positive evaluations, and all of them had dared to be different. In the fu-

ture, therefore, contestants will have to be more daringly individualistic in their approach, if they want to stand out in the tilt's shrinking crowd of semifinalists.

These notes should also be taken to heart by singers here, who are even less individualistic and daring than their American counterparts. Our homegrown singers tend to copy the vocal styles of star singers abroad, with boringly predictable results. On "American Idol," the forthright jurors would make mincemeat out of them, that's for sure!

Feedback

FROM Conrad Lorenzo of Makati City: "I have a good laugh every time I get to read your Boob-tube Boobos, so please come out with more of them soon. They aren't only funny, they say a lot about the kind of people who appear on television."

"I also wish you could write about movies that can inspire young people to have higher and better goals

'AI' FINALISTS/ A2-6

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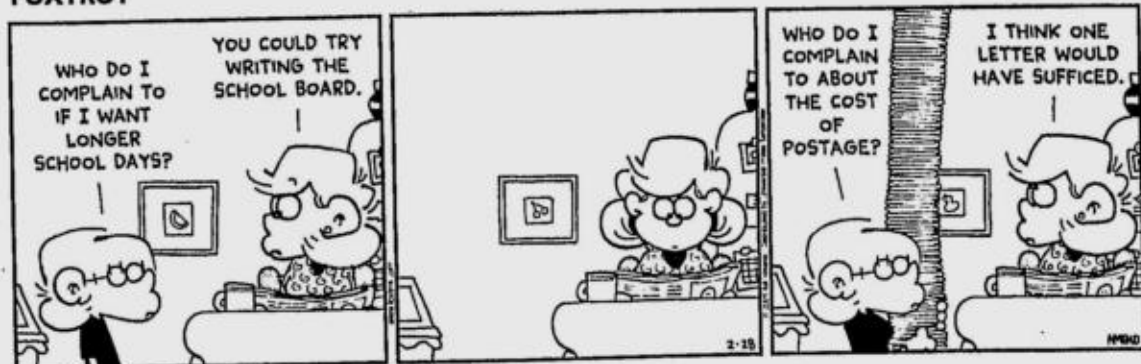
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MARVIN

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BY P.M. JUNIOR



BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



ATOMO AND WEBBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're dynamic, brave and vitally alive! Your energy is both physical and intelligent. You have a big appetite for life. Whatever you do, you go all the way. You don't compromise easily because you are so sure of yourself. You will love this year ahead because it is full of exciting, new beginnings. Doorways open that lead to new doorways!

Birthdate of: Bernadette Peters, actress; Mario Andretti, race car driver; Charles Durning, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You feel unusually intense about everything. That's OK. The range of our feelings is vast. Some days we're almost inert; other days we're like corn popping!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You can be very productive at work today. (When you sweep the floor, worry about the corners; the middle will always take care of itself.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Talk to parents today, if possible. Focus on home and family. Someone might need your attention. You might also want to hide at home for a while.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Today's Moon opposes your sign, giving you the feeling that others oppose you as well. Perhaps they do. More than likely, you're just not sure of their support.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a playful way to start the week off. You're ready for fun! You're also ready for romance and flirtations. You want to have a good time in order to lift your spirits.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Busy day! Short trips, appointments, discussions with siblings and relatives, plus shopping, buying and selling—all keep you on the run.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You have good money-making ideas today. (You certainly have ideas about how to spend your money!) You love to buy beautiful things that enhance your home or your appearance.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): The Moon is in your sign today, giving you a slight advantage over everyone else. However, you might feel a bit more emotional than usual (nothing to worry about).

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You need some privacy today. You need time by yourself to ponder and contemplate life. You also need time to catch your breath, in every sense of the word.

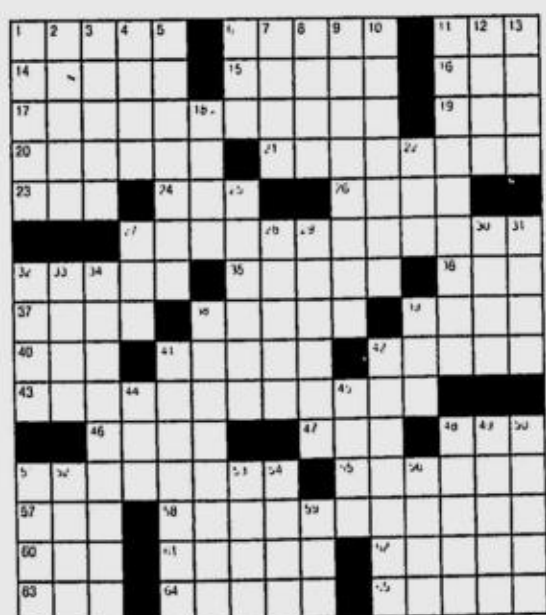
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Discussions with friends (particularly female friends) will be rewarding today. Seek others out. Respond to invitations. Be social today with those you care about.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): People notice you today. The Moon is high in your chart, and this means you are briefly in the limelight for some reason. Give some thought to your appearance and your self-image.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You want to do something different today! You're bored with your routine. Why not visit someplace you have never been to before (a restaurant, a store, a park, a museum)?

DAILY CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- Scale
 - Vote in
 - "Fawly Towers" network
 - "Chicago" star Zellweger
 - Singer Jones
 - Opposite of "neath"
 - Ireland
 - Thai language
 - Matador
 - Stockpiles
 - Tolkien's tree
 - Skirt's edge
 - Impulsive
 - Dorothy Gale's footwear
 - Secure again, as a tent
 - Aviator Post
 - Itinerary word
 - Urgent acronym
 - Fizzy drinks
 - One from the sticks
 - Day break?
 - Muslim female quarters
 - Northern India monotheists
 - Arizona team
 - Part of AARP
 - Lanka
 - Exclamation of contempt
 - Greaseproof paper
 - Chevy model
 - Perl on "Frasier"
 - "Carmen Jones" co-star
 - Shaping tool
 - Gawks at
 - Steeple top
 - Roman gods
 - Browned bread
 - Superman's adoptive parents
- DOWN**
- Minotaur's Isle
 - Whiskey sour ingredient
 - Like some gases
 - No more than
 - Enthusiastic greeting
 - Cut short
 - Ms. Nettleton
 - Formerly
 - Heat units
 - Shrink session
 - October Revolution participant
 - Suitor
 - Field yield
 - Leopold's co-defendant
 - Psychic letters
 - Goodness me!
 - Corded fabric
 - Back of a tape
 - Andean pack
 - Wealthy
 - Fifth Avenue retailer
 - Author Ayn
 - Actor Morales
 - Those shooting stars?
 - California port
 - Towel ID
 - Lively nightclub
 - Head glove?
 - French pronoun
 - Corn bin
 - Michael of "Pole to Pole"
 - On one's toes
 - Grant's follower
 - Alum
 - Mineral vein
 - "The Lion King" lioness
 - Tu (1974 hit)
 - Bubble maker
 - D-Day transport



By Doug Peterson
Pasadena, CA

Saturday's Puzzle Solved



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LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBING



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2005

RJ rocks

RAMON "RJ" Jacinto is the featured artist at Merk's on March 12.

The show is titled "RJ Jacinto Rockin' at Merk's." Richard Merk is special guest.

"I consider myself a recipient of many blessings and my love for Rock 'n' Roll is certainly one of those blessings," RJ says. "I never want the music to end."

SHOW TIME

RJ is in his early 50s. "As I age," he says, "I find that music acquires more meaning and I enjoy it, and sharing it, more."

RJ Jacinto's band is composed of Ernie Vinoya on keyboards, Angie Bonnevie on vocals, Owin on bass, Benjie Evia on drums and Gabby Jacinto on rhythm guitar.

Call 757-4720 or 757-4721 for inquiries.

This month

MERK'S Bar Bistro (at Level 3, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center Makati) continues to showcase exceptional Filipino performers this month.

Mondays, laughter and soul music take center stage with Bernie Uy all Mondays of March.

The Latin band Cruzin plays on March 1 and 22, Route 70 on March 8, 15 and 29.

Wednesdays—March 2, 9, 16 and 30 are jazz nights with Richard Merk, Eddie Katindig and Sandra Lim.

Catch Acoustic Jive on March 3, 10, 17 and 31; pop band Forte on March 4, 11 and 18. On March 5 and 19, it's Aretha & the Souled Out Band.

Keyboardist Romy Posadas plays during happy hour from Monday to Wednesday; acoustic girl Mae Thursday and Saturday and on March 26. Another acoustic artist, Dawn, plays Fridays and on March 23.

'Colour Everywhere'

CHRISTIAN Bautista's first major solo concert is "Colour Everywhere," set March 4, 8 p.m., at the Araneta Coliseum.

It is being presented by Dunkin Donuts, which has already produced a special CD album for the young singer, who became popular via ABS-CBN's "Star in a Million" contest.

Christian is also a recording artist of Warner Music Philippines.

Back at Tavern

A4, THE QUARTET of Dyords Javier, Isay Alvarez, Pinky Marquez and Bimbo Cerrudo, returns to Tavern for a lounge series March 1, 8 and 15.

The group's last lounge series was two years ago. That they're excited about the forthcoming one is an understatement. "This



RAMON "RJ" Jacinto

kind of show gives us a different high," says Javier. Audience feedback is immediate; it's a lot more fun."

Tavern is at Greenbelt 3.

East Wing

THE BERNIE Pasamba Music Consultancy plays at East Wing, Robinsons Galleria, on March 11. Daryl Shy gives a live acoustic performance on March 18. Shows are at 5-6 p.m., at the first level.

Marlboro's MXTronica

CLUBBERS were treated to a lot of partying firsts when Philip Morris Philippines Manufacturing Inc. (PMPMI) gave them a taste of Marlboro's MXTronica at the PhilTrade Center, Roxas Boulevard.

The PhilTrade was transformed into a state-of-the-art dance hall for 5,000 guests.

With the finest audio equipment and plasma television sets that flashed computerized images, MXTronica wowed the crowd with non-stop electronic dance music and colorful visuals.

A live band later jammed with a virtual music ensemble.

"This is a milestone in the Philippine party scene," said PMPMI managing director Chris Nelson.

The party went on till the wee hours, and the guests were surprised to see breakfast being served.

Cadio at e's

CATCH balladeer Cadio and his band at Edsa Shangri-La Manila's e's Thursdays at 8:30 p.m. Cadio sings Cole Porter, Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett and Johnny Mathis. No cover charge.

Wanted: impersonators

DO YOU sing, act and feel like your favorite celebrity? Join Brick Road's first-ever contest for promising impersonators. The competition is open to participants 15 years and older; male or female; solo, duets or groups of up to five members.

Entry forms are available at the Ad & Promo Department of Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall.



LAS PIÑAS Medical Society Choir



CHRISTIAN BAUTISTA

Grand finals is on April 30. Over P100,000 in cash, gift certificates and other prizes await winners, plus a chance to perform regularly at The Brick Road.

First elimination is on March 12. Call 681-5401, loc. 109, for details.

The Brick Road is located at the East Wing Carpark, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Marcos Highway cor. Felix Avenue, Cainta, Rizal.

Singing doctors

THE LAS Piñas Medical Society Choir performed during the LPMS cultural night at the Insular Life Theater, Filinvest Corporate City. Members of the choir are: (seated from left) Stella Marie Jose, Joy Buensalido, Evangeline Lim, Fatima Ocampo, Blessilda Mantaring, Orpha Abrigo and Ma. Elena Villacorta; (standing from left) Adrian Buensalido, Joselito Acuin, Noel Perez, Pio Villacorta, Arvin Maribibi, Renato Jose, Migo Mantaring and Jacinto Mantaring.



A4, (l-r) Dyords Javier, Isay Alvarez, Pinky Marquez and Bimbo Cerrudo

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- 3 Infection
- 4 Son of the Mask

Guaranteed Seats Cinemas: P90.00

- 5 Lemony Snickets
- 6 Constantine
- 7 The Aviator

Movies are subject to change without prior notice. Customer Service Hotline: 886-7516

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM
ABS-CBN 2			
NBN	Value Vision		
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Joynde
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping		
IBC 13		Lifestyle	
Solar Nicklodeon	Blues Clues		Fairly Odd Parents
MYX		Urban MYX	
ETC		The O.C.	
Cinema One		Sugo Ng Tondo	
Studio 23	Bewitched	Survivor: Thailand 24	
AXN		The Bold & The Beautiful	
Star World	Weird TV		
CNN		Killer Instinct	
National Geographic Solar Sports		In This Corner	
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Intarins By Design	Decorating With Style
HBO		Dragonstorm	
Star Movies		All The Pretty Horses (3:45 PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scoby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show	
ESPN			
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Stepover Club
Cinemax			Federal Protection
Hallmark Channel	Mad About You	Vinegar Hill	
Discovery Channel		American Chopper	
MTV Philippines Sports Plus			
EWTV	St. Matthew	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Benediction And Devotion

TUESDAY
7:30 PM and 10:00 PM



SPECIAL SCHEDULE THIS WEEK!

Channel	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 2	Showbiz No. 1	Sandra's Romanos Tedyarayo	Masked Rider Ryun	Value Vision	Next Stop	Art Is-Kool	Arine Ring Kesho	Glass Shoes	One Place
ABC 5			Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
GMA 7	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
RPN 9	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
IBC 13	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Solar Nicklodeon	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
MYX	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
ETC	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Cinema One	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Studio 23	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
AXN	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Star World	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
CNN	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
National Geographic Solar Sports	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Lifestyle Network	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
HBO	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Star Movies	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Cartoon Network	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
ESPN	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Disney Channel	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Cinemax	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Hallmark Channel	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
Discovery Channel	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
MTV Philippines Sports Plus	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I
EWTV	Hey Arnold!	EZ Shop	Wild Thornberrys	Home Shopping Network	Resto	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	Take 5	Starting Over	Drains Studio I

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Academy Awards a curse,

HOLLYWOOD—While all of Hollywood lusters after an Oscar, winning one of the coveted golden statuettes is no guarantee of immortal stardom. Just ask Louise Fletcher, F. Murray Abraham or Luise Rainer.

As the 19 acting nominees bite their fingernails ahead of today's Academy Awards, they would do well to spare a thought for previous winners of the prizes who quickly sank back into the obscurity from which they briefly emerged.

While the Oscars are credited with mythical powers of launching stellar careers, few people have ever heard of onetime laureates such as Jane Darwell, Edmund Gwenn or Walter Brennan—who won three of the gongs in just five years—giving rise to the theory of the dreaded Oscars curse.

"Unfortunately, an Oscar has never guaranteed stardom," said Tinseltown Awards expert Tom O'Neil. "Many actors and actresses have called winning an Oscar a curse."

"Just look at Luise Rainer—she won Best Actress twice and never made a movie again," he said referring to the Teutonic star who won back-to-back Oscars in 1936 and 1937 for "The Great Ziegfeld" and "The Good Earth."

And Rainer is not alone in the ranks of Hollywood's forgotten. Brennan, too, rose to staggering heights, winning Best Supporting Actor Oscars in 1936 "Come and Get It," "Kentucky" (1938) and "The Westerner" (1940).

He then quietly vanished from the public eye, despite his regular work in B-grade movies until his death in 1974.

The 1976 Best Actress victor, Louise Fletcher, crowned for her terrifying portrayal of Nurse Mildred Ratched in "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," still works in Hollywood, but is rarely troubled by autograph hunters these days.

And, for a brief moment, F. Murray Abraham's name was on everybody's lips after he won Best Actor for his role as Antonio Salieri in 1984's "Amadeus."

But since then he has not landed a role in a single major movie,



HALLE BERRY



CUBA GOODING JR.



HILARY SWANK

working mostly in television.

"The Oscar sometimes derails your career," producers don't just you because they don't want you extra money," Cates said.

"Winning an Oscar in the first or two years

Bleep may be for irreverent

HOLLYWOOD—The host of the 77th annual Academy Awards, comedian Chris Rock, rehearses his routine at Hollywood's Kodak Theatre ahead of his performance before up to a billion global viewers.

Show producer Gil Cates played down fears that the irreverent Rock, in hot water for disparaging the glittering show, could spark a scandal with his usual off-color language.

"Chris has a sense of humor about everything he says is said humorously," Cates told journalists.

But ABC television network taking no chances.

Like last year, the 2005 Oscars will be subject to a seven-second broadcast delay to give censors time to cut out any profanity.

"We have the bleep machine ready, but bleeps will be used as needed," Cates said, adding, however that he strongly disapproved of the growing tendency to slap restrictions on live broadcasts.

But he is still faced with potential threats that could disrupt his finely-laid plans for the show, which will be attended by 3,300 guests: rain and the possibility of a terrorist attack.



CHRIS ROCK rehearses.

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City Tel. No. 8981440-41

SON OF THE MASK GP 1:25, 3:35, 5:45, 7:55, 10:05	CONSTANTINE PG13 12:00, 2:35, 5:10, 7:45, 10:20	LEMONY SNICKET'S UNFORTUNATE EVENTS GP 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10
AVIATOR PG13 11:40, 2:55, 6:10, 9:30	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA PG13 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00	AVIATOR PG13 12:30, 3:50, 7:10, 10:30

MTRCB PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.

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Entertainment Guide

CINEMA SCHEDULES

Gateway Cineplex 10 LEVEL 4, GATEWAY MALL

THE AVIATOR 12:10 / 3:00 / 6:50 / 10:05	LET THE LOVE BEGIN 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
SON OF THE MASK 12:50 / 3:35 / 6:20 / 9:05	CONSTANTINE 12:10 / 2:35 / 5:00 / 7:25 / 9:50
SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA 12:15 / 3:20 / 6:25 / 9:30
INFECTION 2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00	SHALL WE DANCE 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
RAY-LIFE STORY OF RAY CHARLES 1:30 / 6:50	SIDEWAYS 4:15 / 9:35

ALI MALL CINEMAS

1 THE AVIATOR 1:00 / 4:25 / 7:50	4 SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 11:00 / 1:20 / 3:40 / 6:00 / 8:20
2 CONSTANTINE 12:40 / 3:20 / 6:00 / 8:40	5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00
3 SON OF THE MASK 12:00 / 2:45 / 5:30 / 8:15	

ALL FEATURES AND DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

ARANETA COLISEUM SHOWS

Jars of Clay: Show You Love March 2 Norah Jones In Concert March 12

Rivermaya & Kitchie Nadal Live! April 16

CENTER EVENTS

BINIBINIS AT ARANETA CENTER
Press Presentation, March 8, Tuesday, 11am, Gateway Mall
Parade of Beauties, March 13, Sunday, 3pm
Grand Coronation Night, March 19 Saturday, 7pm, Araneta Coliseum

COOL JAZZ COOL CLASSICS
Free jazz performance by East Of The City band every Fridays & Saturdays at the Coliseum Circle

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Superbowl Of China & Food Express Level 3, Gateway Mall

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Exclusive SCREENING

Robinsons Movieworld GALLERIA
February 23

FOOTSTEPS

SYNOPSIS: JASON DAVIS, an adrenaline-junkie TV news reporter, falls for beautiful AMBER CARLEN. He receives a tip that a double murder is about to be committed. Estranged from his wife NANCY and eight tear-old daughter MAXIE, Jason needs to re-prioritize his life. The murder victims turn out to be Juvenile Court Judge Stone and his wife. Deputy D.A. STEVE CARLEN is assigned to the case. Jason connects Steven and Amber, and he publicly accuses Steve of harassing him. The latter blames it all on Amber. Jason finds no information on her, but he finds a matching Amber Cardinelli, who had attempted to murder her brother. Jason breaks into her apartment where he finds evidence that Deputy D.A. Steve Carlen is the perpetrator. He races at Steve's in time to see Amber being sexually assaulted by her brother. The police and media arrive, it's a hot story, but Jason is on his way to be with his family.

Subject for MTRCB Rating

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANGHAI CINEPLEX
1st floor Shangri-la Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City Telephone: 633-2227 / 633-7851 loc. 171

1 (DOLBY)	SON OF THE MASK GP
2 (DOLBY)	LEMONY SNICKET'S GP
3 (DOLBY)	AVIATOR PG13
4 (DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE PG13
PREMIERE	
(DOLBY)	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA PG13

Filinvest

FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	LEMONY SNICKET'S
2 (DOLBY)	SHALL WE DANCE
3 (DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE
4 (DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE
5 (DOLBY)	THE AVIATOR
6 (DOLBY)	THE AVIATOR
7 (DOLBY)	MASK-2 SON OF THE MASK
8 (DOLBY)	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
9 (DOLBY)	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
10 (DOLBY)	INFECTION

Eastwood CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	LEMONY SNICKET'S
2 (DOLBY)	MASK 2: SON OF THE MASK HITCH
3 (DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE
4 (DOLBY)	THE AVIATOR

Araneta Center
CINEMA GUIDE
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1	CONSTANTINE
2	SOON TO OPEN
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SON OF THE MASK

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Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	RESERVED
2	RESERVED
3	RESERVED
4	RESERVED
5	RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
MASK-2 SON OF THE MASK
CONSTANTINE
NIGHT JOB

1	CONSTANTINE
2	CONSTANTINE
3	NIGHT JOB

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph (Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	RESERVED
2	RESERVED
3	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	CONSTANTINE
5	NIGHT JOB

METROPOLIS
www.clickthecity.com.ph (Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	INFECTION
2	NIGHT JOB
3	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4	DREAMBOY
5 (DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE
6	SON OF THE MASK

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph (Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007

1 (DOLBY)	BLADE TRINITY
2	RESERVED

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	SOON TO OPEN
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Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
2	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 (DOLBY EX)	CONSTANTINE
4	FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2	ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
3 (DOLBY)	FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
4 (DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2	MEET THE FOCKERS
3 (DOLBY)	ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
4 (DOLBY)	ELEKTRA

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2	MEET THE FOCKERS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (DOLBY)	BULLETS
2	NIGHT JOB
3	PUNLA
4 (DOLBY)	SIDEWAYS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE
2	RAISING STRIPE
3 (DOLBY)	ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
4	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
5	LET THE LOVE BEGIN

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	DREAMBOY
2	A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
3 (DOLBY)	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 (DOLBY)	FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2	CONSTANTINE
3	SCHOOL OF SEDUCTION
4	RAISING STRIPE

Berna Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	NIGHT JOB
2	SON OF THE MASK

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

if you ask these winners

win but you need to do something to maintain that momentum. If you fail, you turn yourself into a Cuba Gooding Jr., battling to have decent roles."

Gooding won the Best Supporting Actor award for 1996's "Jerry Maguire" but has battled to find roles worthy of an Academy Award winner since.

Many other Oscar laureates, particularly those honored for supporting roles, have found the Oscar curse to be very real, even if they did not completely vanish from Hollywood's radar screen in the way Edmund Gwenn did after winning the award for "Miracle On 34th Street" (1947).

Youthful winners who never fully emerged from Oscar's long shadow include Marisa Tomei, Anna Paquin and Tatum O'Neal.

Tomei won for her supporting role in "My Cousin Vinny" (1992), an 11-year-old Paquin took the statuette for 1993's "The Piano" and O'Neal became the youngest-ever Oscar winner when she has won for 1973's "Paper Moon" at the age of 10.

Even Hilary Swank, nominated for Best Actress this year for her role as a female boxer in "Million Dollar Baby," has battled on the fringes of fame since winning the top female acting award five years ago.

"After winning for 'Boys Don't Cry' (in 2000), she had a disastrous career for while," said O'Neil.

Until Clint Eastwood picked Swank to star in "Baby," she had been relegated to minor parts in forgettable films, including "The Gift" (2000), "The Affair of the Necklace" (2001), "Insomnia" (2002) and "The Core" (2003).

Halle Berry, who in 2002 became the first black woman to win the Best Actress Oscar for her wrenching role in "Monster's Ball" shifted from the toast of Hollywood to in-joke when she was nominated in January for a dreaded Golden Raspberry award as Worst Actress of 2004 for her role in "Catwoman."

"An Oscar also doesn't mean you are good or a bad actor," O'Neil said. "Halle went from \$2 million per picture to \$10 million, but she also went from best actress to potential worst actress." AFP

machine ready rent emcee

ble death of ailing John Paul II.

Cates refused to be drawn on the subject.

"It is not appropriate to talk about it (that the Pope may die)," he said, "because we all hope it won't happen." AFP

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3 Let The Love Begin	1 Infection	1 Blade Trinity
4 Constantine	2 Night Job	2 Reserved
5 Night Job	3 Let The Love Begin	
	4 Dreamboy	
	5 Constantine	
	6 Son of the Mask	

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SON OF THE MASK
11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:10
GP

AVIATOR
10:50, 2:15, 5:40, 9:05
PG13

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SHANG CINEPLEX

1 SON OF THE MASK MTRCB (GP) 12:05, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00 LMF	3 AVIATOR MTRCB (PG - 13) 11:00, 2:30, 6:00, 9:30 LMF
2 LEMONY SNICKET'S A Series of Unfortunate Events MTRCB (GP) 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 LMF	4 CONSTANTINE MTRCB (PG - 13) 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 LMF

PREMIERE THEATRE: PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
MTRCB (PG-13) 12:15, 3:10, 6:05, 9:00 LMF
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the podium cinema 1. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 2. THE AVIATOR 633-8978	sm.megamall cinema 1 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA 12:20 / 12:50 / 3:10 / 3:40 LMF / 6:00 END 633-1901	sm cebu cinema 1 LAWIG SAYAWIT DANCE DRAMA (032) 231-3876
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METRO MANILA

sm megamall 1. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 2. SON OF THE MASK 3. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 4. INFECTION 5. LOVE ME IF YOU DARE 6. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 7. CONSTANTINE 8. THE AVIATOR	sm city fairview 1. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 2. SON OF THE MASK 3. RESERVE 4. RESERVE 5. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 6. CONSTANTINE 7. DREAMBOY 8. THE AVIATOR 9. CONSTANTINE 10. INFECTION	sm city north edsa 1. DREAMBOY 2. SON OF THE MASK 3. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 4. INFECTION 5. LOVE ME IF YOU DARE 6. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 7. CONSTANTINE 8. THE AVIATOR
sm city sta. mesa 1. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 2. SON OF THE MASK 3. RESERVE 4. RESERVE 5. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 6. CONSTANTINE 7. DREAMBOY 8. THE AVIATOR 9. CONSTANTINE 10. INFECTION	sm city southmall 1. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 2. SON OF THE MASK 3. RESERVE 4. RESERVE 5. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 6. CONSTANTINE 7. DREAMBOY 8. THE AVIATOR 9. CONSTANTINE 10. INFECTION	sm city manila 1. THE AVIATOR 2. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 3. ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13 4. MEET THE FOCKERS 5. SON OF THE MASK 6. CONSTANTINE 7. SHALL WE DANCE 8. PHANTOM OF THE OPERA 9. INFECTION 10. DREAMBOY 11. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 12. CONSTANTINE
sm cinema tutuban 1. RESERVED 2. RESERVED 3. RESERVED 4. RESERVED	sm supercenter sucab 1. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 2. CONSTANTINE 3. THE AVIATOR 4. SON OF THE MASK	sm city bicutan 1. THE AVIATOR 2. SON OF THE MASK 3. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 4. CONSTANTINE

LUZON

sm city pampanga 1. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 2. RACING STRIPES 3. A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT 4. ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13	sm city baguio 1. ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13 2. CONSTANTINE 3. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 4. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	sm city batangas 1. ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13 2. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 3. CONSTANTINE 4. RAISE YOUR VOICE
sm city marilao 1. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 2. RACING STRIPES 3. A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT 4. ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13	sm city bacoar 1. DREAMBOY 2. INFECTION 3. SON OF THE MASK 4. THE AVIATOR 5. CONSTANTINE 6. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 7. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 8. PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	sm city dasmarinas 1. INFECTION 2. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 3. LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS 4. CONSTANTINE
		sm city lucena 1. FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX 2. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 3. LADHOUSE 4. DREAMBOY

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu 1. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 2. RACING STRIPES 3. A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT 4. ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13	sm city iloilo 1. MEET THE FOCKERS 2. RESERVED 3. WITHOUT A PADDLE 4. LET THE LOVE BEGIN 5. CONSTANTINE 6. ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13 7. RESERVED 8. A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT	sm city davao 1. CONSTANTINE 2. SHALL WE DANCE 3. IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE 4. RACING STRIPES 5. DREAMBOY 6. A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
		sm city cagayan de oro 1. CONSTANTINE 2. ALPIE 3. RACING STRIPES 4. FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

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AYALA CINEMAS

THX

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ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 CONSTANTINE	1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	1 LEMONY SNICKET'S	5 INFECTION	1 SON OF THE MASK
2 THE AVIATOR	2 THE AVIATOR	2 CONSTANTINE	6 THE AVIATOR	2 LEMONY SNICKET'S
3 LEMONY SNICKET'S		3 CONSTANTINE	7 SON OF THE MASK	3 SHALL WE DANCE
4 INFECTION		4 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA		4 CONSTANTINE
5 SON OF THE MASK		5 SON OF THE MASK		5

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	Greenbelt 1	Alabang Town Center-Cinema	SEA Merganser	Maricor	Cebu	Fashion Mall	
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Flor (Paz Vega), a beautiful, native Mexican woman becomes the housekeeper for the affluent, yet troubled, Clasky family (headed by Adam Sandler and Téa Leoni). The result is a witty, perceptive collision of cultures and values, and a refreshingly honest look at such life-altering commitments as marriage, parenting and devotion to family.

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

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GALLERIA 632-1115/16

1 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS • THX	6 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00	10:40 1:35 4:30 7:25 10:00
2 SON OF THE MASK 2	7 FOOTSTEPS
10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00	11:50 1:50 3:50 5:50 7:50 9:50
3 CONSTANTINE	8 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00	12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
4 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	9 MEET THE FOCKERS
11:50 2:15 4:40 7:05 9:30	12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
5 INFECTION	10 SIDEWAYS
10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00	12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 CONSTANTINE	10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	5 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	10:20 1:05 4:00 6:55 9:50
3 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	6 INFECTION
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	7 SON OF THE MASK 2
10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50	10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 RAY	5 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
10:40 1:20 4:00 6:40 9:20	11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00
2 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	6 INFECTION
12:30 3:10 6:00 9:00	12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	7 CONSTANTINE
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30 9:00	10:35 1:05 3:35 6:05 8:20 10:30
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	8 SON OF THE MASK 2
11:20 1:45 4:05 6:30 9:00	12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 CONSTANTINE	5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25	1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30
2 SON OF THE MASK 2	6 RESERVE
11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:25	
3 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	7 RESERVE
10:25 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25	
4 INFECTION	8 RESERVE
11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:25	

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1 CONSTANTINE	3 INFECTION
2 SON OF THE MASK 2	4 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS

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1 MADHOUSE	1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 CONSTANTINE	2 INFECTION
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	3 SON OF THE MASK 2
4 BLADE TRINITY	4 CONSTANTINE

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1 CONSTANTINE	1 CONSTANTINE
2 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13	2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 RACING STRIPES	3 MEET THE FOCKERS
4 RAY	4 RAISE YOUR VOICE
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	5 MADHOUSE

DASMARIÑAS (045) 852-2125 ANGELES (045) 892-2448

1 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 HONEY	2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 CONSTANTINE	3 CONSTANTINE
4 INFECTION	4 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	

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1 SON OF THE MASK 2	1 SHALL WE DANCE
2 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	2 RAISE YOUR VOICE
3 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 CONSTANTINE	4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	5 CONSTANTINE
6 INFECTION	6 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13

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1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX	1 CONSTANTINE
2 ALFIE	2 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
3 CONSTANTINE	3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 MEET THE FOCKERS	4 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
5 RACING STRIPES	5 MEET THE FOCKERS
6 SHALL WE DANCE	6 WITHOUT A PADDLE

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A2-6



SCOTT SAVOL

'AI' finalists rapped...

From page A2-1

in their lives, to counteract the negative role models that are being provided for them to follow. We need to give our children the right perspective."

'CEO Sings Timeless Music'

CEOs, COOs and other top businessmen who love to sing will be featured in a fundraising concert, "CEO Sings Timeless Music," at the Meralco Theater on March 16. Performers include Rene Henson, Eric Cruz, Ed Zialcita, Monico Puentevella, Frank Chavez, Sonny Liwanag, Chito Ponce Enrile, Art Manuntag, Jose Mari Chan and Corporate Session (Jimmy and Bing Pabalan, and Umberto Virtucio).

The concert will raise funds for the Character Building Foundation. Other performers include the students of the Halili-Cruz School of Ballet, models in Cora Manimbo's creations, and Raul Lantican and his choir. Call 8905321.

'Las Vegas'

SIN CITY is exposed in "Las Vegas," Studio 23's newest drama, telecast at 9 p.m. every Wednesday. The show takes viewers behind the scenes at the fictional Montecito Resort and Casino, whose security force is run with an iron fist by Big Ed Deline (James Caan).

New kid on the block Danny McCoy (Josh Duhamel) helps Big Ed with the many problems that keep cropping up at the casino, including card-counting cheaters, costly streaks of luck, and rival casinos stealing their big-money players. And, as if these job-related pressures weren't enough, Big Ed finds Danny in bed with his daughter, Delinda (Molly Sims).

Other regulars are Nikki Cox, James Lesure, Vanessa Mareil and Marsha Thomason, and guest stars include Alec Baldwin, Sylvester Stallone, Paris Hilton and Jean-Claude Van Damme.

'The Cat in the Hat'

MIKE Myers stars in "The Cat in the Hat," which will be screened on HBO at 7:40 tonight. In the fanciful film, Sally and Conrad have pushed their mom to the limit. To make things worse, an unexpected guest arrives to turn their world by showing them that "it's good to have fun—but you've got to know how!"



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1 LEMONY SNICKET'S: (Series of Unfortunate Events) 12:30, 3:10, 6:50, 8:30, 11:00 PG-13	
2 MASK 2: SON OF THE MASK 10:40, 1:05, 3:35 PG-13	HITCH Premiere Night DREAM FM 7PM - 10PM GP
3 CONSTANTINE 11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:00 PG-13	
4 AVIATOR 12:20, 3:50, 7:20, 10:50 PG-13	

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U.S. #1 HIT OPENS MARCH 2
MTRCB PG-13 Children below 15 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

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MTRCB G ALL AGES ADMITTED

NOW SHOWING

THIS WEEK'S BOXOFFICE CHAMPION
"BABY" FEVER HITS MANILA

SEQUEL TO THE #1 BOXOFFICE HIT

SON OF THE MASK
THE POWER OF MISCHIEF

BOYS DON'T CRY

Neither do boxers, it seems, and especially not this one played by Hilary Swank in "Million Dollar Baby," the dark horse to win Best Picture and several other major awards in today's Oscars.

As Maggie Fitzgerald, dogged female prizefighter, Swank is willful and unshakable. She won the Oscar in 2000 for "Boys Don't Cry," where she played a character just as willful and unshakable—and, in the end, just as tragic. "Million Dollar Baby" is as much about Maggie as it is about Frank Dunn (Clint Eastwood, who also directed), a legendary, but now reclusive, trainer and manager. Critics are torn between this movie and the expansive, glossy "The Aviator." Martin Scorsese's super-production is spectacular, they agree, but they are also quick to point out "Baby's" lingering effect on the viewer. One critic put it succinctly: "It changes every molecule in your body."

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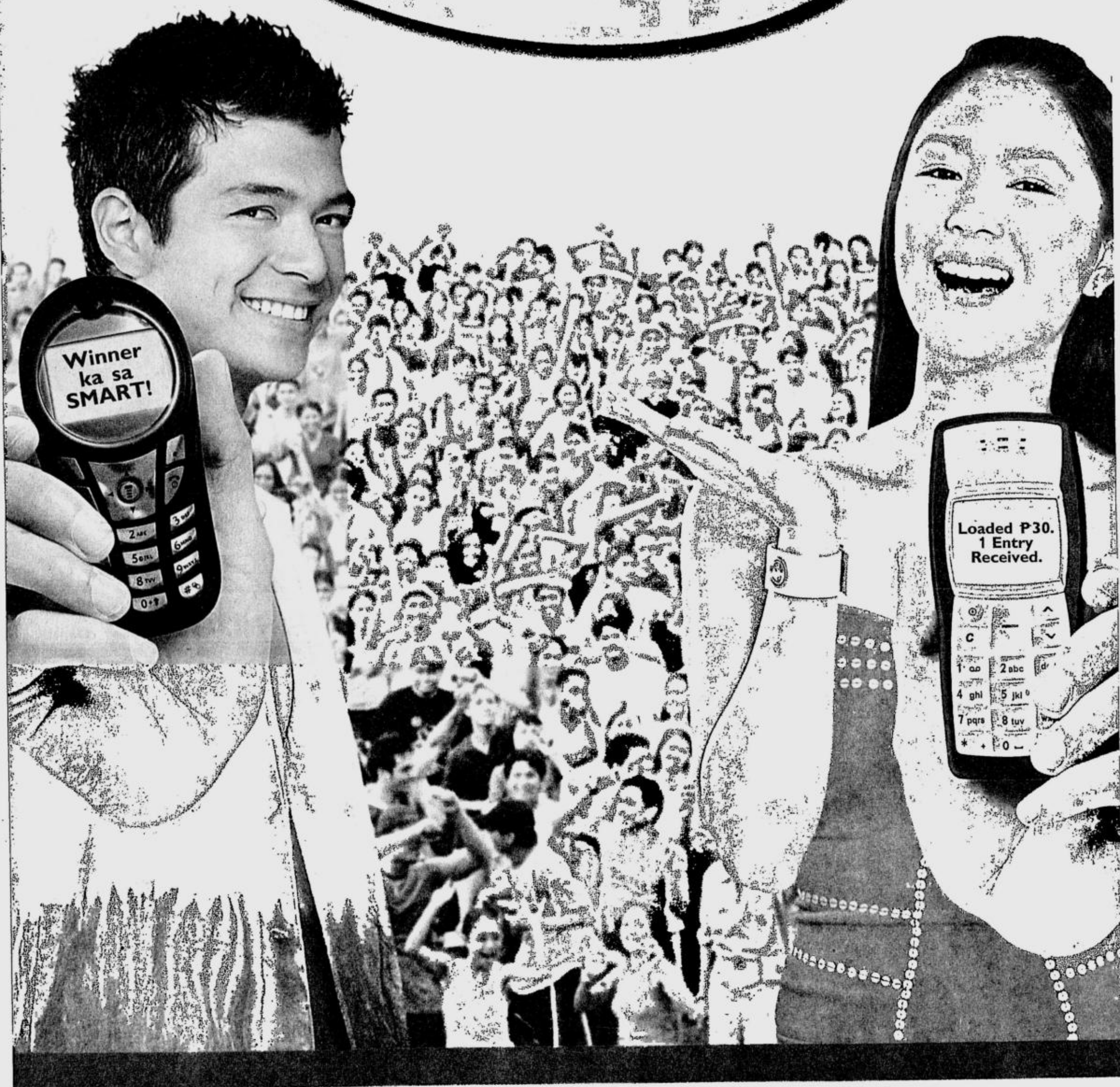
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Citibank to acquire Insular Savings Bank

By Doris C. Dumlaog

CITIBANK N.A., the world's largest financial institution, is expanding its foothold in the Philippines by acquiring Insular Savings Bank from the country's oldest and biggest insurer, Insular Life.

The policy-making Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas approved during its meeting last Thursday Citibank's proposed investment in the thrift bank, according to BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes.

However, Reyes said the value of the deal was not disclosed.

Other banking sources said Citibank and Insular Life only recently signed an exclusivity agreement and would still negotiate on the acquisition terms.

"The actual closing of the proposed investment is still subject to agreement on the final definitive terms and legal documenta-

tion," a source said.

Insular Savings has a net worth of about P860 million, which means that if the parties push through with the transaction, the deal could be worth at least this amount depending on the outcome of a due-diligence audit and the premium that Citibank is willing to pay for 100-percent control.

Citibank, one of the first foreign banks to set up shop in the country, has long been scouting for a local bank to acquire to expand its branch network and bet-

ter compete in the consumer banking business.

"This is an indication of confidence in the country," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said. "The moratorium (imposed by the BSP on opening of new bank branches) also gives an opportunity for those who want to exit to find buyers."

Insular Life wants to divest from its banking interest—despite its profitable operations—to focus on its core life insurance business, industry sources said.

Aside from the existing mora-

torium on the opening of new bank branches, foreign banks wanting to expand aggressively have no choice but to consolidate with other existing local banks. Although the entry of foreign banks in the Philippines was liberalized in the last decade, even pioneer banks like Citibank were allowed to open only six more branches on top of existing ones.

Citibank's expansion plan is similar to the route taken by British bank HSBC Ltd., which acquired PCI Savings Bank from Equitable PCI Bank in 2000 to

widen its customer outreach.

Sources said that Insular Savings attracted the interest of the American banking giant because of its good balance sheet, diversified consumer portfolio, strategic branch locations and wide array of banking licenses.

The thrift bank has 36 branches nationwide—26 in Metro Manila and 10 in key provincial cities like Cebu, Davao and Cagayan de Oro.

Aside from its basic thrift bank license, Insular Savings also has

CITIBANK/B2

Clean Cities project eyes Boracay

By Abigail L. Ho

WITH its pristine beaches and lush forests, Boracay is now being considered by the US Department of Energy and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to become one of the pilot areas for their Clean Cities Program.

The Clean Cities Program aims to improve air quality in certain areas through the use of alternative fuels for transport.

Cities currently included in the Clean Cities Program include San Francisco, Los Angeles and Denver in the United States and Santiago in Chile.

Aside from Boracay Island, other areas in the country being considered as possible pilot sites are Baguio, Davao and two cities in Metro Manila.

The Department of Energy is urging Boracay residents and hotel and resort owners to use coconut methyl ester (CME)-blended diesel to fuel their vehicles and back-up power sources.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez said CME-blended diesel use would not only boost Boracay's bid to become one of the pilot cities for the USDOE-USAID Clean Cities Program, but would also improve air quality in the tourist haven and help preserve its pristine environment.

City officials, including Malay Mayor Ciceron Cawaling and Vice Mayor Frolibar Bautista, expressed full support for the DOE's CME use program.

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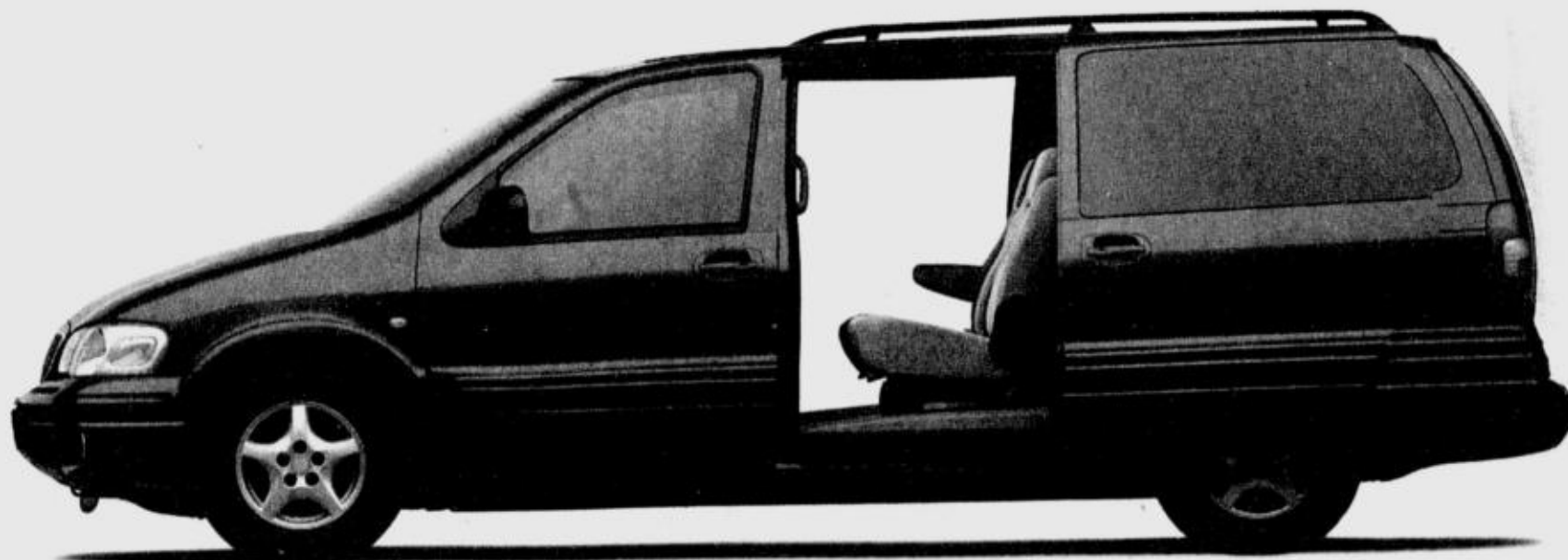


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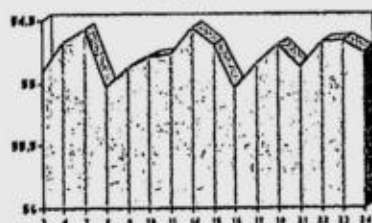
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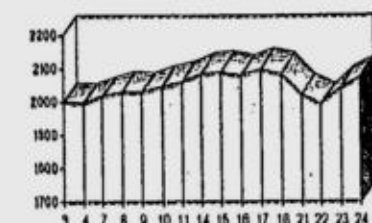
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STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



Selling seen as investors position for IPOs

INVESTORS may still see some pockets of subdued selling next week as investors gear up for new initial public offerings and further track corporate earnings, analysts said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) composite index last week shed 12.74 points or 0.61 percent week-on-week to close at 2,073.19 on four days of trading.

BPI Trade, in its weekly stock market report, observed that the market started weak due to follow-through profit-taking as investors tried to prepare for the upcoming IPOs.

"By mid-week, the Phisix touched a low of 1,992.27 and the market correction has erased all of the gains made in February. This drop in prices attracted bargain hunting and spurred investors to enter the market. The Phisix recovered 81 points in the last two sessions for the week," BPI Trade noted.

The online broker said that what managed to stem the market's bleeding last week was the government's assurance that it would

SELLING/B2

Citibank to acquire ...

From page B1

trust banking, foreign currency deposit unit, quasi-banking and government securities dealer licenses.

Insular Savings is a consistently profitable bank. It chalked up P87.2 million in net profit in 2003 and P76.4 million in 2002. Earnings in 2004 were still being audited by external

auditors but were estimated at the same level as these previous years.

The lender has total assets of P5.2 billion and is one of the biggest thrift banks in the country. Total deposits and loans stood at P4.2 billion and P2.5 billion, respectively.

Citibank, the banking arm of Citigroup, has more than 275,000 employees in 120 countries serving 120 million customers. Citigroup was recently ranked by Forbes Magazine as the No. 1 company in the world in terms of return on equity and other measures.

WORSENING income distribution actually accompanied the dynamic performance enjoyed by our economy over the 1990s. According to data from the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), incomes of the richest one-fifth Filipinos were about 10 times those of the poorest one-fifth in 1988. By 2000, this gap had widened to 12.4 times. While the ratio had reportedly narrowed somewhat to 11.4 in 2003, we have yet to get back to the 1988 income distribution. Compared to the corresponding ratios of 11 in Thailand, 7 in Malaysia, and 4.4 in Sri Lanka, income disparities in the Philippines are among the widest in the region.

Bothered by this observation, economists and political scientists from the Ateneo de Manila University have just released a paper ("Beneath the Fiscal Crisis: Uneven Development Weakens the Republic") that examines the "deeper underlying malady that ails the Philippine economy beneath the current fiscal crisis."

Narrow, shallow, hollow

The problem, according to the paper, can be seen in the way the "boom-bust" behavior of the Philippine economy persists, and a sustained take-off remains elusive. The economic growth we attain may appear respectable in the aggregate, but it largely remains narrow, shallow and hollow. It is narrow in that whatever capital formation achieved over the last 20 years has been largely concentrated in a few families, industries, and regions, and failed to generate overall gains that can benefit other sectors and industries in the economy. That it is shallow can be seen in the way the bulk (75 percent) of our export earnings already come from just electronics and garments, both of which are essentially import-export operations where local value added is thin and backward linkages to the rest of the economy are absent. And it is hollow, as seen in the way unemployment rate actually rose to 10.9 percent in October 2004 from 10.2 percent in the previous year, even with output growth exceeding 6 percent.

This weakness, the paper argues, ul-

Beneath the fiscal crisis

No FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito



timately traces to the state's inability to reduce monopolistic elements and similar structures that encourage inefficiency and widen disparities. Thus, any reforms undertaken must not only target growth per se, but improve the quality of such growth so that it proceeds from a much broader base, generates ample jobs and reduces poverty.

Rule of the few

The undue concentration of economic power is borne out by data cited in the paper. A World Bank report in 2000 noted the highly concentrated nature of the Philippine corporate sector. As of 1997, 757 out of the 1,000 biggest corporations were Philippine-owned, and 216 of these belonged to only 39 corporate groups. Total sales of these 216 group-owned companies comprised more than half of total sales of the largest Philippine-owned corporations. Furthermore, among publicly listed non-financial companies, one dominant shareholder controlled on average 41 percent of the equity, while the top five shareholders have majority control of three out of every four listed companies. The report surmised that this figure actually underestimated the phenomenon, as less than 10 percent of the 1,000 largest corporations are listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

A recent study by Rafaelita Aldaba calculated the proportion of industry sales accounted for (concentration ratio) by the top 4 firms in Philippine industries. Her results show that the Philippine manufacturing sector has become more and more highly concentrated, with the average ratio having increased from 71 percent in 1988 to 81 percent in 1998. Furthermore, the proportion of manufacturing industries with concentration ratios ranging from 70 percent to 100 percent rose from 65 percent in 1988

to almost 90 percent by 1998.

Low level equilibrium

The same high degree of concentration in Philippine industry has led to our failure to attain higher levels of production and employment. Basic economic theory teaches that monopoly power leads to lower (but profit-maximizing) industry output and inhibits the use of more widely beneficial (e.g. more labor-intensive) modes of production. This has led our economy to what economists call a "low level equilibrium trap" that has kept us from attaining the much higher rates of economic growth enjoyed by our neighbors since the 1980s.

The problem is that the government itself has been largely instrumental in the attainment and perpetuation of such monopoly power. Through a series of policy reversals from the competition-enhancing reforms of the late 1980s and the 1990s, the government has protected a select group of capitalists by preventing other firms from introducing changes that would increase competition and productivity. On top of this, certain regulatory agencies have been "captured" by the very firms they are supposed to regulate, further contributing to the perpetuation of monopolistic tendencies in key sectors of the economy.

All these trends tell us that much more is needed beyond fiscal reforms to get us out of our age-old problems, and point to the need to pursue economic democratization through stronger and wider competition, among other things. (Next week: a 10-point agenda for economic democratization.)

THE PHILIPPINE Economic Society is holding its 42nd annual meeting on Friday, March 4 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the BSP Assembly Hall. With the theme "Beating the Odds," the forum will be keynoteed by Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri and architect Felino Palafox Jr., and will feature eight workshop sessions on various topics of interest. Call Barbara Gualvez at 893-9578 or 816-1548 or e-mail ione_pes@yahoo.com for details.

If you'd like a copy of the full Ateneo paper, e-mail me at chabito@ateneo.edu

From page B1

Selling seen as investors ...

vigorously push new tax reforms to raise revenues. The government is also becoming bolder in selling its assets to be able to trim its budget deficit.

"The government also said it has cut its budget deficit target to P180 billion from P184.5 billion, which was viewed positively by investors," BPI Trade said.

The government has announced moves to sell its crown jewels, notably a controlling stake in San Miguel Corp., to help in efforts to plug the budget gap.

"The current mood remains optimistic that the economy will continue to grow as long as government remains on track with its fiscal reforms. However, we may

see some profit taking next week as investors try to raise cash for the upcoming IPO's of Manila Water Co. and of SM Investments Corp.," BPI Trade said.

AB Capital Online said in a daily report said the market's support might remain at 1,980 and resistance at 2,200.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

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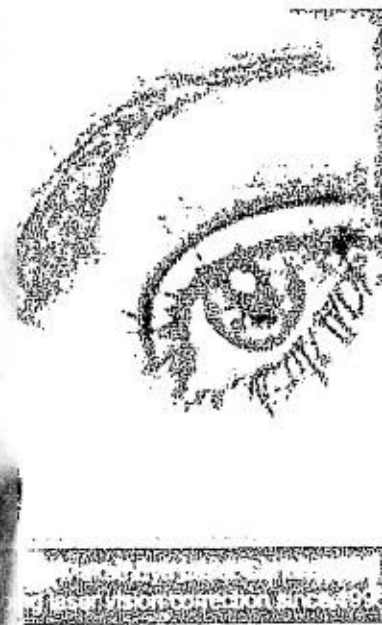
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SC stops Semirara claimant

THE SUPREME Court has issued a temporary restraining order against a pasture lessee from breaking into and taking over a tenth of the mining area of the publicly listed Semirara Mining Corp.

The TRO, released on Thursday before the long weekend, was issued by the high court's First Division, which is chaired by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

The high court order restrained HGL Development Corp. from enforcing the favorable decisions it had earlier obtained from the Court of Appeals in Cebu and the Regional Trial Court in Culasí, Antique.

HGL, owned by businessman Henry G. Lim, is claiming a total of 367 hectares of grazing land that overlaps the active Panian mine on the coal-rich island.

But Semirara claims the Department of Environment and Natural Resources had already cancelled Lim's grazing concession for failure to pay the annual fees and submit grazing reports.

Along with the TRO, the Supreme Court also ordered HGL and Culasí RTC Judge Antonio Bantolo to comment within 10 days on Semirara's petition, while Semirara was required to post a P1-million bond.

HGL is being represented by the Chavez, Miranda, Asecho Law Offices; Semirara, by Rodrigo Berenguer & Guno law firm.

According to the grapevine, HGL is asking for P200 million in exchange for dropping all its claims, an amount Semirara finds "preposterous."

In addition to the Antique case, there is another case filed by HGL in the Caloocan RTC against the DENR and Semirara.

Money-go-round

• GABRIEL "Jay" Singson Jr., the investment banker-son of retired Bangko Sentral Governor Gabriel C. Singson who used to work with the Lorenzos, has accepted the position of finance undersecretary in charge of privatization, vice Eric Recto.

It is not clear where Recto would go, after his appointment as Land Bank president was recalled.

• JOY Campos, the eldest child and lone daughter of taipan Jose Yao Campos, will take over as chair and CEO of the Unilab Group on—this is no joke—April 1.

• FORMER Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho wishes to clarify a Cocktales report last Wednesday that, as a P1-a-year adviser to Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes, he had recommended that the planned securitization of the province's Malampaya revenue-share be pursued locally, so as to preclude any conflict-of-interest issue with Camacho's new employer, Credit Suisse First Boston.

Holiday in hell

THE TROPICANA Copacabana Apartment Hotel in Pasay City has been ordered by the Supreme Court to reimburse an Australian guest US\$2,000 and Australian \$4,500, in addition to awarding him more than P1.1 million in damages and cost of litigation, after the guest's safety deposit box was surreptitiously opened and pilfered with the help of hotel employees way back in 1988.

The Australian, businessman Maurice McCoughlin, flew back to the Philippines 11 times in the course of the 17-year trial, aside from being bounced from one government office to another in his search for justice.

Heard through the grapevine

TAIPAN Henry Sy, whose family has one board seat in San Miguel Corp., has not completely ruled out the possibility of the SM Group bidding for the nearly 41-percent government stake in the country's biggest food and beverage conglomerate, especially with the estimated P30-billion war chest the family's SM Investments would raise from its ongoing road show. (Email: cocktales_pdt@pdt.net or cocktales_pdt@yahoo.com)

SMC allots P900M for flour projects

SAN MIGUEL Corp., Southeast Asia's biggest food and beverage firm, is investing more than P900 million to expand and improve its flour facilities and meet the growing demand for flour-based products.

Sources said the SMC group would put up a blending facility and expand its existing flour mill in Batangas.

SMC said last year it was spending close to P5 billion to expand its food facilities.

A new PureFoods Hormel meat plant in Cavite started operating last year to process bacon and ham, among other processed meats.

"The expansion of the plant into a world-class facility is part of our commitment in giving consumers only the best quality products," SMC chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. had said.

In Batangas, a flour mill and a flour-blending facility have also been completed and commercial operations are expected to start soon.

The company's expansion and modernization program in the food sector is part of the larger program to invest an estimated P15 billion in the domestic market over the next

SMC/B9

Clean Cities project eyes Boracay

Representatives from the Boracay Foundation, Malay Aklan Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association and Boracay Land Transport Multi-purpose Cooperative also backed the DOE project.

"We are very happy that the local government of Malay as well as the civil society and transportation groups in Boracay recognize the importance of addressing Boracay's air quality through the use of clean alternative fuels. We sincerely hope Boracay will become a member of the Clean Cities Program," Perez said.

At present, more than 300 tricycles ply the streets of Boracay Island. All of these use synthetic-based 2T oil.

Perez has urged all tricycle drivers and operators on the island to start replacing the synthetic-based 2T oil that they currently use with CME-based 2T oil.

President Macapagal-Arroyo in April last year launched

the CME program to boost the country's bid to become 60-percent energy self-sufficient by 2010.

The CME program

also aims to improve air quality and enhance the lives of 3.5 million coconut farmers by giving them a new revenue source.

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(In compliance with R.A. 7041)

1. GSIS Home Office - **CORPORATE EXECUTIVE OFFICER IV**
SG-26; Item No. 1747.67; Bachelor's degree; Five (5) years of relevant experience; 32 hours of relevant training; Career Service (Professional)/ Second Level Eligibility
2. GSIS Home Office - **CORPORATE EXECUTIVE OFFICER III**
SG-25; Item No. 1747.66; Bachelor's degree; Five (5) years of relevant experience; 32 hours of relevant training; Career Service (Professional)/ Second Level Eligibility
3. GSIS Home Office - **CORPORATE EXECUTIVE OFFICER II**
SG-24; Item No. 1747.65; Bachelor's degree; Four (4) years of relevant experience; 24 hours of relevant training; Career Service (Professional)/ Second Level Eligibility
4. GSIS Home Office - **CORPORATE EXECUTIVE OFFICER I**
SG-23; Item No. 1747.64; Bachelor's degree; Four (4) years of relevant experience; 24 hours of relevant training; Career Service (Professional)/ Second Level Eligibility

DOE awards 5 coal contracts

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy last week awarded five coal exploration and development contracts covering various locations in the Visayas and Mindanao to three local mining firms.

Two contracts were signed with MG Mining and Energy Corp., a subsidiary of fuel and energy trading firm Murphy Group, for the exploration and development of coal resources in South Cotabato and in the

southern part of Cebu.

Another two contracts were awarded to Forum Exploration Inc., the local arm of Canadian firm Forum Energy Corp., for exploration activities at the Balamban-Naga and Dalaguete coal fields in Cebu.

The fifth contract, which involved the right to explore and develop coal resources in Diplahan-Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay, was awarded to Philex Mining Corp.

Since the start of the year, the DOE has awarded six coal operating contracts.

The first coal contract signed this year was with Samaju Corp. for the exploration and development of coal resources in Batan Island, Rapu-rapu, Albay.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez said the five recently-awarded coal operating contracts were

seen generating around P89 million in new investments.

He said the entry of more investors into the industry, particularly with the expected rise in coal demand, would "help reinvigorate the economy."

"These projects will generate employment in the areas where they will operate. I hope the optimism in the coal industry will be sustained to further advance our goal of energy independence through the use of indigenous resources," he said in a statement.

The country is estimated to have 330 million metric tons (MT) of coal reserves.

Last year, coal production hit an all-time high of 2.7 million MT last year, 33 percent higher than the 2003 production of 2.03 million MT.

Local coal producers in 2002 was only 1.66 million MT.

Piltel pays P500M in NTC regulatory fees, penalties

By Clarissa S. Batino

PILIPINO Telephone Corp. has paid the National Telecommunications Commission more than P500 million in regulatory fees and penalties from 1992 to 2004, finally resolving the tiff between the two.

The NTC has agreed to cut Piltel's obligations from P1.3 billion to P500 million after the justice department, in an opinion, advised the NTC of a legal precedent and cautioned it against the "confiscatory nature" of its surcharges and penalties.

The NTC, in a decision dated Feb. 9, decided to compute the outstanding regulatory fees of Piltel based on paid up capital but, as a compromise, it excluded from the computation the preferred shares issued as part of the company's debt restructuring in 2002.

The inclusion of the preferred shares in the computations plus the penalties earlier bloated Piltel's dues to P1.3 billion.

Precedent

Of the P1.3 billion in fees earlier assessed by the NTC, P24 million was for 2004. About P500 million represented the penalties and surcharges.

Piltel had been computing its regulatory fees based on the par value of its shares. But a Supreme Court ruling in year 2000 (the NTC versus Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.) set a precedent that regulatory fees must be computed based on par value.

This prompted NTC to reconcile its computation and decided to impose penalties only for the period 2000 to 2004.

Piltel pointed out that the NTC's assessment of regulatory fees increased substantially in 2002.

The commission applied its computation on the increase in Piltel's paid up capital after restructuring half of its almost-P42 billion debt at that time.

The phone company explained that there was no actual cash infusion corresponding to the increase in capital stock following the debt-to-equity conversion.

Losses

The Smart subsidiary pointed out that despite having registered profits in 2004, Piltel's accumulated losses of P22 billion remained a burden.

In arguing its case, Piltel noted that even the Bureau of Internal Revenue had agreed to reduce its assessment of the company's tax liabilities in 2002.

"The NTC is authorized to assess regulatory fees only as payment for a reasonable cost of supervision and regulation by the NTC. What the commission is doing is already confiscatory in nature," said a Piltel official earlier.

In the first place, Piltel only rides on the network of Smart. In effect, there is no additional cost to the NTC in regulating Piltel, said a company official.

Phone, broadcast networks and cable companies are required to pay the NTC yearly a regulatory fee computed at 50 centavos for every P100 in paid up capital.

One-time gain

An NTC official cautioned that the collection from Piltel was a one-time gain for this year and should not be considered by the budget department as recurring income when setting the agency's annual collection target.

The NTC collected P1.45 billion in 2004 against a target of P1.4 billion.

Of the total, P783.2 million came in the form of regulatory fees paid as of the end-September deadline. The NTC said the payment came from 290 broadcast networks and 56 radio and phone operators.



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at the Philippine Stock Exchange Auditorium, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2005

BUSINESS

B5

Commercial banks' bad loans, assets declining

By Doris C. Dumlaog

THE BAD loans of commercial banks further eased to 12.72 percent of total loans as of end-December from 13.57 percent a month ago.

This was attributed to the sale of portion of the banks' non-performing loans under the Special Purpose Vehicle framework.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said the slowdown in the NPL ratio was a result of a 6.1-percent decline in bad loan levels. The banking system's total loans went up by only 0.1 percent.

The end-December NPL ratio also represented a big improvement from the 14.05 percent ratio a year ago.

The BSP in a report, attributed the easing of the NPL ratio of banks specifically to the bulk sale of P16.38 billion worth of bad loans under the SPV Act of 2000.

The SPV Law intends to help banks get rid of their bad assets by waiving some of the taxes and reducing fees usually collected in the sale or transfer of assets. It waived the documentary stamp tax, capital gains

tax and e-VAT (expanded value added tax) and likewise reduced the registration/transfer fees by 50 percent.

To benefit from the incentives, transactions must be completed by April this year. There are moves in Congress, acting on a petition of the Bankers Association of the Philippines, to extend the SPV Law for two more years.

Net of inter-bank loans, the NPL ratio declined to 14.84 percent from 15.78 percent in November and from 16.67 percent at end-December 2003.

Restructured loans contracted by 6.3 percent, allowing a drop in the ratio of restructured loans to total loan portfolio to 6.87 percent in December from 7.31 percent in November.

Non-performing restructured loans also sharply fell by 10.7 percent, bringing the ratio to total loans to 47.42 percent from 49.73 percent in November.

The decline in the NPL levels was also partly due to more foreclosure proceedings, which meant that in lieu of the bad loan accounts, the bankers stocked up more real and other

properties owned or acquired (ropoas).

The ratio of ropoas to gross assets inched up to 5.57 percent in December from 5.45 percent a month ago owing to a 1.6 percent monthly rise in ropoas to P210.83 billion.

In the meantime, the industry's non-performing as-

sets—the sum of NPLs and ropoas—improved as a ratio of gross assets to 11.41 percent from 11.69 percent in November and 12.85 percent last year.

"This transpired as the NPAs shrunk from last month at a faster rate of 2.7 percent compared to that of gross assets at

0.3 percent," the BSP said.

In line with the improvement in these asset quality indicators, the end-December NPL and NPA coverage ratios strengthened further to 60.40 percent and 35.56 percent, respectively, from 53.35 percent and 32.76 percent at end-November.

"These were the results of beefed up loan loss reserves and NPA reserves as well as lower NPLs and NPAs," the BSP said.

As of end-December, loan loss reserves stood at P137.12 billion while the NPA reserves were reported at P153.03 billion.

BIR told to plug leaks in inheritance tax system

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance ordered the Bureau of Internal Revenue to come up with measures to plug leakages from inheritance tax, stressing the need to improve collection from one of the most evaded types of taxes.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said the government had been losing a lot of revenue from delinquency in the payment of the 20-percent inheritance tax due to lack of monitoring strategies.

Purisima, who just assumed the top post at the DOF two weeks ago, noted that in 2003, the BIR collected only P500 million worth of inheritance tax.

The amount, he said, was too small for the supposedly lucrative tax source.

The P500-million worth of inheritance tax collection in 2003 meant there were only P200 billion worth of wealth inherited by heirs from people who died. Divided by the country's over 80-million population, Purisima said, this meant Filipinos inherit an average of only P2,500 each.

"The figure is too small. This can't be," Purisima said in an interview after his speech before members of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry who gathered for their general membership meeting Thursday.

Purisima said one of the DOF's programs was to improve the revenue-collection capabilities of the BIR and the Bureau of Customs, the national government's biggest revenue contributors.

One way to do it is to enhance the data-handling, gathering and analysis capabilities of the bureaus, especially the BIR. Purisima said the BIR would strengthen its database tie-ups

with various government agencies, from where the revenue agency could gather third-party information useful for tax collection.

He cited government agencies like the Land Transportation Office, the Registry of Deeds, the Social Security System, the Government Service Insurance System and the Department of Foreign Affairs.

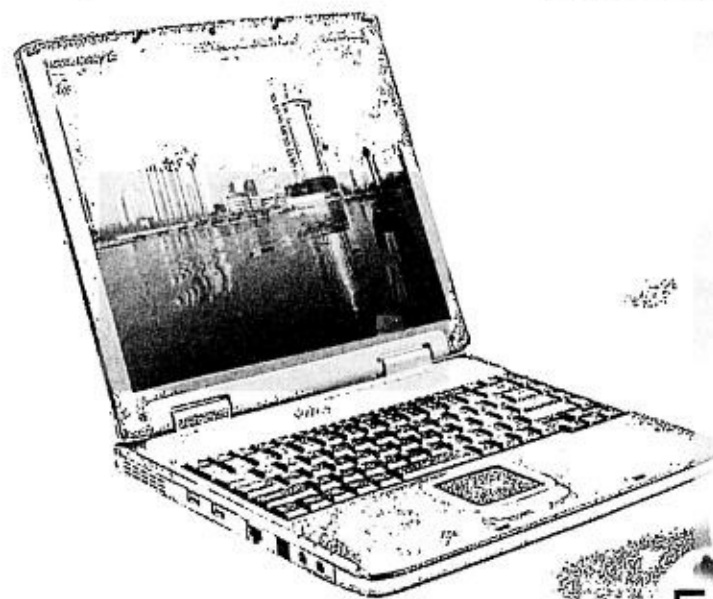
Through the BIR's link with the

database of other government agencies, it will be able to determine income and assets of taxpayers, and then match them with their tax payments. That way, the BIR will be able to find out whether there is tax evasion.

The finance chief said there was a great potential of collecting much more revenue if the BIR would use third-party data in auditing tax payments.

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Aussie company planning to set up steel plant in RP

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AN AUSTRALIAN steel company is looking at the possibility of putting up a \$100-million production plant in the country, Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez said.

Hernandez, who is also managing head of the Board of Investments, said in an interview that Australian firm Bluescope Steel Ltd. was engaged in making flat steel products.

He said such a venture could qualify for incentives under the the Iron and Steel Act.

The law is meant to promote the local iron and steel sector. It requires that local partners put in at least 35 percent in equity in such ventures to qualify for incentives.

"It may also qualify under the Omnibus Investments Code if it would make products or use technology that are new to the country, or its investments would be big enough," Hernandez said.

"Officials of this company told me they were looking at making products mainly for export, but also for the local market," he added.

BOI data show that Bluescope, formerly known as BHP Steel, evolved from the merger of three pioneers in the Australian steel industry—Broken Hill Proprietary (BHP) Co. Ltd., John Lysaght (Australia) Pty. Ltd., and Australian Iron & Steel Ltd.—with some units of New Zealand Steel and Butler Manufacturing.

Since its public listing on the Aus-

tralian Stock Exchange, Bluescope has expanded into Asia through the establishment of plants in China, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam.

According to a company profile, Bluescope is currently the region's leading flat steel products maker.

Bluescope serves customers in the building and construction, manufacturing, automotive and packaging industries.

The company is known in the building and construction sectors for the brands Colorbond and Zincalume, which are "versatile and high-quality steel building materials."

Bluescope is also a major exporter that supplies customers in the United States, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific region.

Business asked to tap BIR program

By Michelle V. Remo

FINANCE Secretary Cesar Purisima, feeling the heat of the government's desperate need to shore up revenue collection, has urged members of the business community to avail themselves of the No-Audit Program (NAP), which calls for the voluntary 20-percent increase in the tax payers' remittances.

In a speech during the joint membership meeting of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other business groups last Friday, Purisima asked the businessmen to participate in the scheme.

"Avail yourself of the NAP program, then you can sleep well at night," Purisima said, hoping to get his message across particularly to those who missed out paying the right amount of taxes in the past.

Under the NAP, those who will voluntarily increase their tax payments by 20 percent from year-ago level will be exempted from the Bureau of Internal Revenue's tax auditing. NAP takes effect this year and will run for five years.

The executive branch has implemented the NAP through an executive order issued by Malacañang early this year.

The BIR said the additional revenue to be generated from NAP was hard to estimate but added that at least 100,000 taxpayers are expected to avail themselves of the program.

"This time is crucial for the Philip-



PURISIMA

pines because we are now less than two months away from the deadline for the filing of income tax returns (ITRs)," Purisima said.

April is a make-or-break month for the BIR, an attached agency of the Department of Finance and the government's biggest revenue contributor.

The DOF and the BIR hope to collect in April the bulk of their expected revenue collections for the whole year. The BIR believes the NAP will help the agency achieve its collection target of P546.89 billion for this year.

Purisima also prodded members of the business community to pay their income taxes ahead of the April deadline.

Purisima said the DOF's main thrust under his leadership would be to maximize ways to improve revenue collection. He noted that government revenue lost due to tax leaks amounted to P150 billion to P200 billion a year. He said the losses were largely due to tax delinquency and insufficient capability of the government in the past to detect dishonesty in tax payments.

He said the government's dwindling revenue collection was the reason it had been lagging behind its counterparts in the region in the area of fiscal health. He noted that while Malaysia's revenue-to-GDP (gross domestic product) ratio stood at 16 percent last year, the Philippines' was only at 12.5 percent.

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FOR ORTIGAS & COMPANY, LIMITED PARTNERSHIP

REX C. DRILON II
Chief Operating Officer

Where will the SMC money go?

FINANCE Secretary Cesar Purisima has announced that the government will unload its 41-percent stake in San Miguel Corp. It will be the biggest sell-off in Philippine history.

I happen to be one of those who believe strongly that the government should never be in private business. So, I welcome this proposed sell-off. But unloading the SMC shares is not as simple as phoning a sell order to your friendly stockbroker.

Sec. Purisima is referring to the shares held by the PCGG (27 percent), the SSS (8 percent) and the GSIS (6 percent). These shares are usually referred to as the government block in SMC.

But, in the strict sense, the government does not own these shares.

The shares held by the PCGG have a rather circuitous background. When SMC chair Andres Soriano Jr. died, the family decided to sell out. Danding Cojuangco wanted to buy. But he had used all his personal assets to buy Ayala shares the year before.

The Soriano shares were held by 20 holding companies. Danding set up 20 parallel holding companies that would buy the Soriano holding companies thereby legally avoiding some expenses such as stockbroker's fees. But Danding's holding companies were mere shells and could not borrow even from Cocobank where he was president.

It was the coconut oil mills, bought earlier with coconut levy funds and ran by Danding's boys, that borrowed from Cocobank. The money was then lent to Danding's holding companies which, in turn, bought the Soriano holding companies. (By the way, the mills must have paid their loans by now. Whether Danding's holding companies have paid the mills remains a deep, dark secret.)

The Sandiganbayan recently declared the coconut farmers, from whom the levy was extracted, as the real owners of the shares held by Danding's holding companies.

The GSIS shares are not an in-

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General



vestment of the government. The GSIS may be classified as a government-controlled corporation, but government employees own it. All the assets of the GSIS have been built up from contributions out of salaries of government employees—from the lowest janitor to the chief justice, plus the counterpart contributions of government agencies and instrumentalities.

The 1997 GSIS law clearly specifies how the funds shall be administered, invested and disbursed. A board of trustees runs the GSIS and the secretary of finance is not a member.

The SSS shares are not an investment of the government either. The SSS is classed as a government-controlled corporation, but all the money the government has in the SSS is the P500,000 appropriated way back in 1957 for start-up expenses. The current total assets of about P180 billion has been built up from contributions from private sector employees and their employers.

By the 1997 SSS law, the funds plus any earnings are guaranteed to be returned to the members in the form of death, disability and pension benefits. The law specifies, in great detail, how the reserves (money not needed to be spent immediately) are to be invested. A commission runs the SSS and the Secretary of Finance is not a member.

If the shares are sold, where will the money go? The proceeds from the PCGG shares will have to be used for the benefit, not of the entire coconut industry, but solely of the coconut farmers. The GSIS and SSS shares should be converted into government bonds, at a preferential rate, say, 1 percent above market.

It will be interesting to watch Sec. Purisima's fancy footwork in handling the sell-off.

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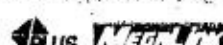
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Editor Leo Magno

Roxas slams government approach to ICT development

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

FORMER Trade Secretary and now Senator Manuel Roxas dropped a bomb on government's current policy on the development of the information and communications technology industry.

Roxas criticized the Commission on Information and Communications (CICIT)'s "regimented" approach to industry development. "The CICIT seem[s] to have taken a different approach. I sense that they're practicing [a] 'command and control' policy commonly found in the military. Their approach is very regimented and centralized," the lawmaker told Infotech.

The CICIT's proactive role in

mapping the country's ICT development strategy is "too much government intervention that might hamper progress of this sector," Roxas said in an e-services forum last week.

He reiterated in an interview that market forces have been allowed to dictate the industry's direction. Growth was unhampered because government played only a supporting role, he said.

"We (at DTT) were cognizant of the fact [that] the private sector led the industry growth. We deliberately, consciously didn't dictate where, how and who should do things. We just provided support," the lawmaker added.

During the forum, Roxas said the CICIT should take on the role of an advisory body.



ROXAS

Roxas as trade secretary was named co-chair of the Information Technology and E-Commerce Council until it was reorganized by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The senator also revealed that the CICIT no longer controls the P1-billion e-government fund, following his recommendations during the Senate bud-



PENIA

get hearings this month.

"What kind of an animal is CICIT? It's not accountable for the e-government fund. So it was a basic management decision to realign the fund back to the government agencies," he said.

DBM has allocated the e-government fund for agency modernization. With the fund's creation, the CICIT was put in

charge of its management, evaluating which government projects would get allocations.

CICIT chair Virgilio Peña, however, defended the agency, saying it was not hampering the growth of the country's ICT industry.

Peña agreed with the lawmaker, however, about labeling the CICIT as a mere "enabler."

"There is no intention to regulate or centralize (ICT development in the Philippines). The (CICIT)'s e-government and e-learning strategy is meant to support industry by generating demand," Peña said in reaction to Roxas' remarks.

Peña said he was "in the dark" as to why Roxas criticized the CICIT and its role in the development of the Philippine ICT industry.

Fight vs piracy a national interest: Arroyo

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

THE COUNTRY'S continuing fight against piracy should not only serve the interest of foreign countries but should also protect the interest of Filipinos as well, according to a message from President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo read during the launch of a Microsoft-commissioned report on the present state of piracy in the Philippines.

Waldo Flores, senior deputy executive secretary, read the President's speech.

While the Philippines remains in the watchlist of the International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA) as one of the top violators of foreign intellectual property, Ms Arroyo said the country's fight against piracy is not merely to comply with the IIPA request.

"Intellectual piracy is dishonesty and is, therefore, immoral. It is an affront to individual and national integrity and inimical to our revenue collection activities, investment promotions and to overall economic progress," she said.

Piracy has no place in a civilized society, Ms Arroyo added.

The President however admitted that she was saddened with IIPA's decision to put the country in its watchlist despite the passage of the Optical Media law regulating optical media that is being used to distribute unlicensed software and illegal copies of movies and music.

She has ordered the Optical Media Board, a new body replacing the Videogram Regulatory Board, to intensify its anti-piracy activities this year, following IIPA's decision.

Adrian Cristobal, newly appointed director general of the Intellectual Property Office, also expressed the same views during the launch.

Under his watch, he intends to push for policies that will first serve the interest of Filipino IPR stakeholders.

"We need to generate pride among our people on our local talents and heritage so as to elevate awareness on intellectual property rights and local culture as well," he said.

"If we cannot protect our own intellectual property, how can we protect others?" Cristobal said.

He plans to introduce new programs that will collectively promote Filipino trademarks, while transforming the IP Office into an alternative venue efficient for dispute resolution.

In an interview, Shawn Waddoups, economic officer of the Economic Affairs of the US Embassy, agreed with Cristobal.

Waddoups however, suggested that the Philippine government should balance its educational and enforcement activities in anti-piracy if it wants to be taken out of the IIPA watchlist.

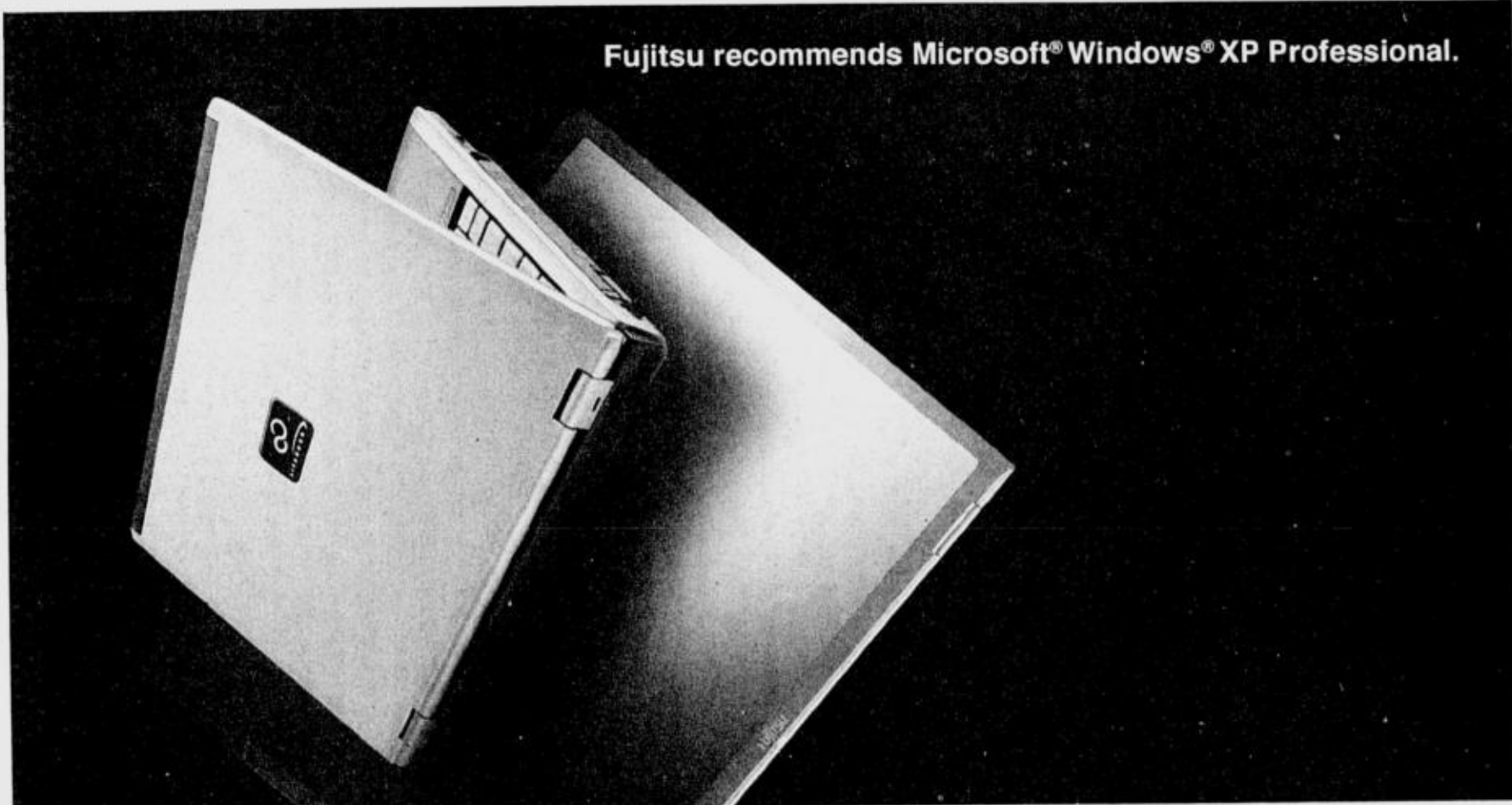
"You can't overly emphasize education or enforcement," he added.

The IP Coalition, a group of stakeholders representing industry organizations, presented the "Copyright in the Philippines 2004" report commissioned by Microsoft. The 40-page report was written by Professor Ramon Clarete of the University of the Philippines Economics Foundation.

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Quedancor to expand loan fund by P700M

By Christine A. Gaylican

AGRICULTURE and micro-finance lender Quedancor Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor) on Friday said it would expand its loan portfolio by another P700 million to P5.7 billion this year to reach out to more rural borrowers and microentrepreneurs.

Nelson Buenaflor, Quedancor president and chief executive, said that the state-run agency would work closer with local government units as well as commercial and development banks, to meet this goal.

According to Buenaflor, the East-West Bank plans to avail of a rediscounting window from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, allowing the financing institution to acquire P100 million in debt papers from Quedancor.

East-West Bank officials said they were merely complying with Presidential Decree 717, also known as the Agri-Agra law.

Commercial banks, including the Allied Banking Corp., the Philippine Veterans Bank, the government-owned United Coconut Planters Bank and Land Bank of the Philip-



BUENAFLOR

ppines, opened similar credit rediscounting windows with Quedancor over the last two years.

Buenaflor said the participating banks bought the debt papers of Quedancor's farmer-clients to comply with the provision requiring the financing institutions to invest in the agriculture sector and agrarian reform-related projects.

Quedancor will, in turn, use the funds to issue non-collateralized loans to thousands of small farmers, fisherfolk, food retailers, rural and urban poor borrowers nationwide, he said.

Quedancor serves as the banks' conduit for lending and collection, he added.

Buenaflor reported that as of December 2004, Quedancor's total lending portfolio stood at P5 billion.

For 2005, the state-owned firm will earmark P5.3 billion for its lending activities and P438 million for guarantees.

Also, Quedancor this year will open a similar credit tie-up with the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines, Buenaflor said.

Japan envoy confident dev't in Subic will boost CL trade

By Allan Macatuno,
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Japanese Ambassador Ryuichiro Yamazaki has expressed confidence that the ongoing construction of the \$215-million Subic Bay Port Development Project here will speed up progress in Central Luzon.

During his visit here last week, Yamazaki said the major infrastructure development being funded through the special yen loan assistance granted by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) would spur economic growth in the region.

"Subic freeport's development is on the right track," Yamazaki told officials of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) during a meeting at the Subic Bay Yacht Club.

Yamazaki was earlier briefed on the construction of the container port at the Leyte Wharf in Cubi Point here.

According to SBMA Administrator Alfredo Antonio, Japan plays a key role in the development of the freeport.

"This is a very auspicious occasion that will strengthen friendship and collaborative partnership between the Philippines and Japan," Antonio said.

He said the development would make Subic port the major portal of the new Global Gateway, an alliance of Subic and Clark, contributing to the growth of the economy of the entire country.

"After the completion of the new container port, Subic freeport will [benefit from] the international shipping trade in the Asia-Pacific region with the expected increase in volume and sea traffic," Yamazaki said.

The port project, along with the Subic-Clark toll road, would provide an alternative route and port facility to decongest Metro Manila.

The port modernization project was awarded to Penta Ocean Corp., whose partners include Shimitsu Corp. and Toa Corp., after it passed the comprehensive evaluation conducted by the SBMA's bids and awards committee.

Penta submitted the lowest bid of P5.22 billion, about 25 percent lower than the government's estimate of P6.99 billion. The government had saved up to P1.77 billion for the project, SBMA officials said.

Yamazaki also visited the Japanese-owned businesses here and said more Japanese investments would come in as they see Subic "as one of the most excellent sites for business ... set up outside of Japan."

Napocor plan seen to jack up rates in Mindanao

By Abigail L. Ho

THE NATIONAL Power Corp.'s plan to transfer three of its power barges to Mindanao to help augment the power supply in the island will likely jack up electricity rates in the island, Lanao del Norte Rep. Alipio Cirilo Badelles warned.

Badelles, chair of the House committee on energy, questioned Napocor's plan to transfer the barges, saying that the power generating facilities were very expensive.

Because of the high cost of operating the barges, he said power rates in Mindanao would surely go up if these would be used to supply electricity to the main grid.

"Why [are the Department of Energy] and Napocor insisting on bringing expensive types of power generating facilities to Mindanao?" Badelles asked. "Is there a bias against the island?"

He said that, as early as four years ago, studies had revealed that there would be a power shortage in Mindanao by 2007 or 2008, depending on the water level at Lake Lanao.

Despite the projected power shortage, he said the DOE and the Napocor did not put in place any concrete plans to address the shortfall. Instead, some power barges were programmed to be transferred to the island.

He said deploying power barges to various areas in Mindanao was not the solution to the looming power shortfall.

Projects like the Leyte-Mindanao interconnection, the rehabilitation of the idle Aplaya power plant in Misamis Oriental, the dredging of the Pulangi Power Complex, and the construction of the Agus 3 hydropower facility should generate some 300 MW in capacity for the Mindanao grid, he said.

According to Badelles, the DOE should revisit these projects instead of resorting to temporary and expensive solutions like the deployment of three power barges to the island.

Napocor had earlier announced that it would transfer three 32-megawatt (MW) power barges to Panabo City in Davao, General Santos City and Bislig in Surigao del Sur.

SMC allots P900M ...

From page B3
three years.

Cojuangco added that SMC's investment reflects the company's continued confidence in the country.

"Given that consumer spending for non-durables such as food and beverage continues to grow, prospects for our business remain bright," he said.

In the next two years, a mixed-use facility will be set up in Lagu-

na, and a veterinary medicine plant and petfood plant in Tarlac will also be put up.

SMC will also invest in expanding hog supply in Bukidnon and Tarlac. For its poultry operations, SMC is also in the initial phase of building a broiler farm in Bulacan. The company will also expand feed mills in Mariveles, Bataan, and in Misamis Oriental.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez



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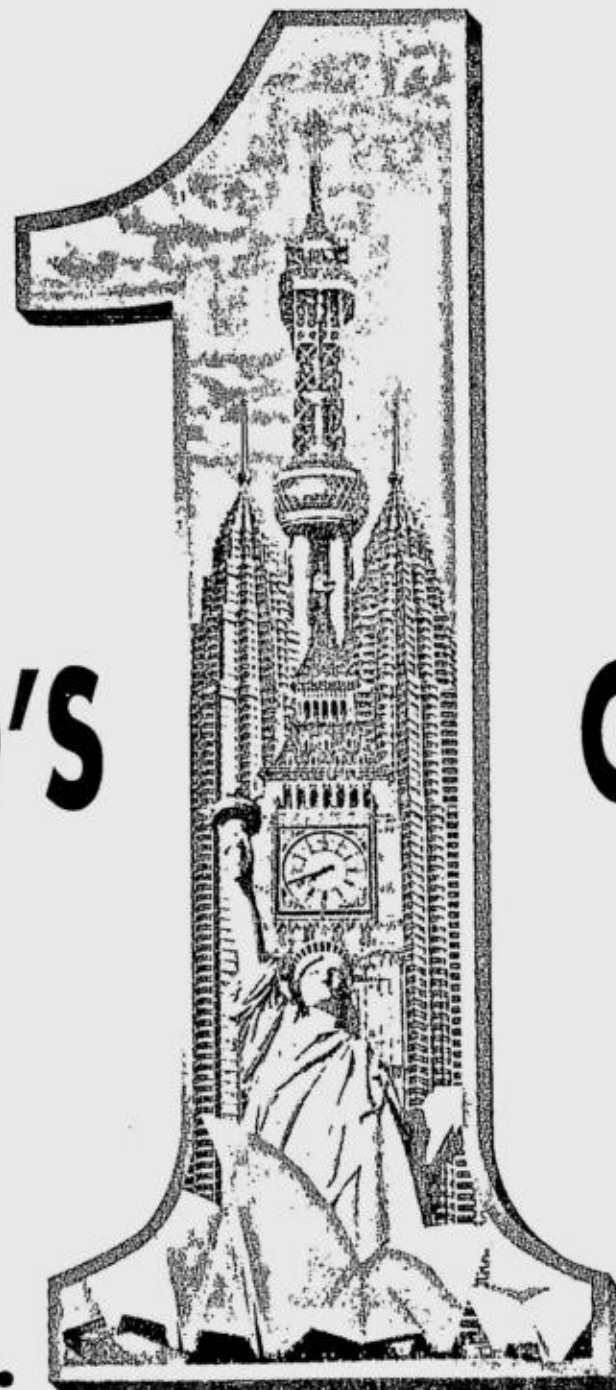
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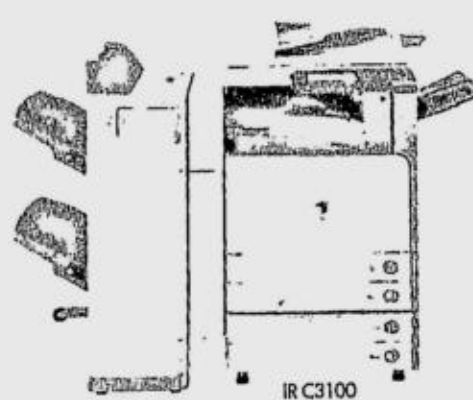
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Landbank set on \$100-M global bond offering

By Doris C. Dumlaog

THE STATE-OWNED Land Bank of the Philippines plans to raise \$100 million via a fresh global bond offering in April—its first attempt to tap the offshore market since the Asian currency turmoil in 1997.

Banking sources said that LandBank was planning to issue senior notes with a maturity of three to five years, similar to an offering recently completed by Equitable PCI Bank, and another to be launched by Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.

The sources said that the bank was now evaluating underwriting arrangements with various investment banks.

The bank will use proceeds from the offering to repay some maturing debts this year, the sources said.

LandBank has yet to seek the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' Monetary Board before it pushes through with the borrowing.

Despite recent sovereign credit downgrades on the Philippines, the LandBank believes it is in a good position to tap the global bond market because of its good balance sheet, banking sources said.

The bank reported a record-high net profit of P2.25 billion in 2004 and aims to chalk up an even better bottomline of P2.5 billion this year. It also has set another record by exceeding its net income targets for four years in a row.

The fourth biggest bank in the country recorded a net income of P1.5 billion in 2001, which increased to P1.65 billion in 2002.

In 2003, it posted a record high of P2 billion. It later topped this figure following its performance in 2004.

The bank's non-performing loan (NPL) ratio improved from 14.7 percent in 2003 to 12.8 percent in 2004, better than the industry average of 13.6 percent.

The ratio is seen to drop further to around 9 percent once the bank has

booked last year's successful sale of non-performing assets (NPAs) worth P13.5 billion under the Special Purpose Assets Vehicle Law.

The bank's NPL ratio has steadily improved over the last five years from a high of 22.4 percent, equivalent to the 2000 level worth P27 billion.

It aims to significantly reduce its NPL level to P13.4 billion in 2005 from P22.7 billion in 2004.

The bank is now working on a second SPV sale this year.

Landbank placed fourth among the country's biggest banks last year with an 8 percent increase in resources from P266 billion to P287 billion.

Meanwhile, the bank ranked third in deposits, which grew by 16 percent from P185.2 billion in 2003 to P214.9 billion in 2004.

In terms of loans and capital, the bank ranked fifth with P133 billion and P21 billion, respectively.

PLDT to extend P10/call promo

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. is extending its P10 per call promo until March 11.

The telco giant said it felt a surge in fixed-line connections and increased network activity due to the popular promo, according to PLDT officials.

Butch Jimenez, the firm's head of retail, said that PLDT hotline 171 had been getting 27,000 calls each day from customers asking whether the promo would be extended.

The P10 per call rate applies to all PLDT calls anywhere in the country, as well as to all Smart and Talk N' Text mobile subscribers regardless of how long the call takes.

PLDT has more than 21 million fixed-line and wireless customers all over the country.

The P10 per call rate was supposed to end in February. But the National Telecommunications Commission, Jimenez said, allowed PLDT to carry on with the campaign until March 11.

"The volume of calls and number of calls between PLDT as well as PLDT to Smart and Text N' Text are growing significantly everyday," Jimenez said in an interview. "Aside from that, we are experiencing an upsurge of new landline connections nationwide."

Jimenez said that the flat P10 promo rate was designed to encourage the use of landlines and allow the telco giant to gain more subscribers.

In the last 4 years, PLDT said it had lost about 350,000 customers who preferred to subscribe to wireless plans.

Before it came up with the P10 promo, PLDT charged P5 per minute for national direct distance or NDD calls, and P13.73 per minute for calls to mobile phones.

Jimenez added that he expected a boost in market share as soon as PLDT proceeded with its Vibe 99 plan.

PLDT rivals Globe Telecom Inc. and Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc. are offering similar buffet pricing.

Globe's Innove Communications Inc. is offering a "one country, one rate" price of P650 a month for all within-network landline calls anywhere in the country.

Digitel's Sun Cellular had been offering its 24/7 plan since October. The plan allows subscribers to make unlimited calls and messages within the network for an additional fee of P250 a month, or P100 for 10 days.

Globe's Touch Mobile said it would launch a P300 unlimited call and text promo for 30 days and P50 unlimited text for 5 days.

Jimenez said major independent phone companies in the provinces and PLDT subsidiaries and affiliates such as PLDT Clark Telecom Inc., Subic Telecommunications Company Inc. and PLDT-Maratel Inc. would take part in the P10 per call campaign.

Jimenez said that in the last 4 years, the telco giant lost an average of 85,000 subscribers each year, due to the popularity of the cellular phone.

He said with the new rate, PLDT should be on track to reverse that trend and start registering a net gain of subscribers for 2005.

Jimenez said reconnection figures looked promising for PLDT. In 2002, only 32 percent of those temporarily disconnected requested reconnection. In 2003, 30 percent of its customer base opted for reconnection.

In 2004, reconnection rate went up to 50 percent. For 2005, PLDT is targeting a reconnection rate of over 70 percent, according to Jimenez.



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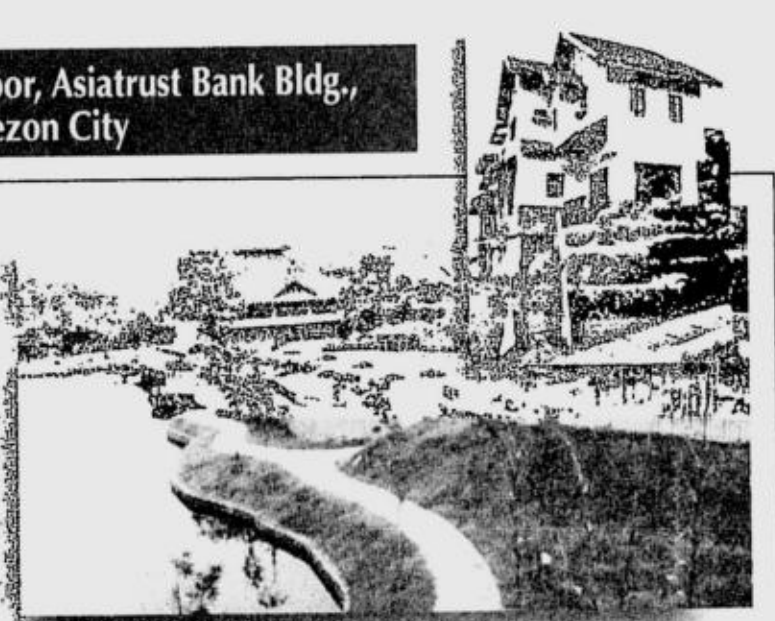
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Spanish firm wants piece of SLEX rehab

MALAYSIA'S MTD Capital is asking the Philippine National Construction Corp. to honor its joint venture with Hopewell Crown Infrastructure Inc. so that the consortium may proceed with the P10-billion upgrade of the South Luzon Expressway.

Aside from the Malaysian firm, the Spanish construction company Gabinete de Estudios Tecnicos Ingenieria, or Getinsa, wants to be part of the SLEX project through Hopewell Crown, according to Joaquin Bañares, Hopewell president.

Bañares said that they hoped to proceed with the project as soon as possible.

"But PNCC's cooperation is still crucial," Bañares added during an interview.

He said the Getinsa offered to provide engineering services for the project. It was even willing to provide equity funding by becoming part of the Hopewell consortium.

"The firm also offered to organize a consortium of other Spanish companies to boost Spanish participation in the project, including obtaining support from Spanish financial institutions," Bañares said.

During the MTD Capital board meeting in Kuala Lumpur last week, the Malaysian firm affirmed its interest in the joint venture with Hopewell despite the decision of the PNCC to terminate the deal.

"We hope that with MTD's commitment to the project ... the PNCC will realize that it is in the project's best interest to honor its joint venture agreement with the group," Bañares said.

The PNCC, in a disclosure to the stock exchange Friday, announced that the joint venture with Hopewell Crown was nullified, citing alleged financial incapacity of the consortium. The state agency said it was entertaining new joint venture deals with American and Chinese groups.

Hopewell Crown owns 80 percent of South Luzon Tollway Corp., a joint venture with the

PNCC to rehabilitate and eventually operate the SLEX tollway.

MTD Capital had agreed to own 67 percent of Hopewell Crown, a company originally controlled by Hopewell Holdings Ltd. of Hong Kong tycoon Gordon Wu. The tycoon later ceded control to Crown Equities Inc. of George Gao.

A year ago, the company ended up under the control of North-east Development & Acquisitions Corp. In late 2004, MTD Capital was tapped to become a strategic partner and majority owner.

"PNCC refused to deal with NDAC because NDAC and Crown Equities were not parties to the joint venture agreement," PNCC chair Pastor Ramos said in a disclosure. "Neither did Hopewell seek PNCC's prior consent and approval of the transfer of interest. Hopewell swamped PNCC with all sorts of plans, propositions and other schemes and yet still failed to produce the funds."

Bañares pointed out that MTD Capital was the second-biggest tollway operator in Malaysia. Listed in the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange, it registered a turnover of \$152 million on an asset base of \$520 million and equity of \$400 million during the fiscal year ending March 2004.

He said no tollway investor could raise the funds without the Supplemental Toll Operation Agreement, which would serve as the contract between the government and the consortium. Without the Stoa, no creditor would lend money to a big-ticket project that would require debt financing of about 70 percent.

As far as the 30 percent equity is concerned, Bañares said Hopewell could produce the money. He said the group even sought the PNCC's go-ahead to initiate civil works on critical areas of the expressway.

Bañares said despite the uncertainties introduced by the PNCC, the Spanish firm Getinsa still wanted to take part in the project, both as investor and contractor.

Clarissa S. Batino

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NEW MOON AUCTIONEERS

Gov't eyes VAT on overseas calls

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT is looking at imposing a 10-percent value-added tax on overseas communication services—such as long distance phone calls—provided by telecommunication companies.

The proposal is in line with efforts to enhance the efficiency of the country's VAT system.

In exchange for the imposition of the 10-percent VAT, the government is thinking of removing the 10-percent overseas communication tax imposed on telecommunications firms.

The idea is to catch more taxpayers in the VAT chain, and standardize the tax imposed on telecommunications services.

Telcos currently pay two types of taxes: overseas communication tax for outbound long distance calls and VAT for domestic services.

Both taxes have a 10-percent rate, but the VAT has an input-output credit mechanism that creates a tax chain.

Under the overseas communication tax system, telcos pay the entire 10-percent rate.

On the other hand, under the VAT system, telcos are allowed to deduct the VAT they paid in purchasing products or services needed for the operations of their businesses (input) from their VAT liabilities (output).

In case the input VAT is bigger than the output, the company can either claim a refund or carry over the excess tax liabilities to

the following year.

The Senate ways and means committee has tasked the Department of Finance to study the proposal to replace the 10-percent overseas communication tax with VAT, and to compute its impact on revenue.

"The advantage of this is that more (services) will be included in the VAT chain, which is ideal because the more products and services captured by the VAT system, the more efficient it will be," said a Finance official.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue, however, earlier expressed reservations over the proposal.

The BIR said there was a possibility of revenue losses for the government, because the VAT system will allow telcos to claim input VAT credits.

The input VAT credits of telecom firms normally cover the VAT on imported capital equipment.

But the finance official explained that input VAT credits of telecom firms were already deducted from the output VAT on their domestic services.

Therefore, there was no need to have another deduction from their VAT liabilities for overseas services.

In a public hearing on telecom taxes held at the BIR last year, industry giants Globe Telecom and Smart Communications expressed initial agreement to having the overseas communication tax replaced by VAT.

RP in talks to develop idle property in Japan

THE GOVERNMENT will begin contract negotiations with Berg Corp., the Japanese developer that won the bid to develop two Philippine properties in Japan.

The move finally puts underway long-delayed plans to raise revenue from the country's idle properties abroad.

The two properties in Kobe include one empty land, and another with a condemned structure.

The two are part of the three pieces of Philippine property in Japan that the Arroyo administration prioritized for leasing.

The other one was a former consular office located in Nampaidai.

According to Finance Undersecretary Eric Recto, who supervises the government's privatization efforts, negotiations between representatives of the Philippine government and the Japanese firm on the details of the contract will start in the next few days.

This development came after Japanese representatives questioned the Philippines for delays in the implementation of the contract, the bidding of which was held in 2003.

The Philippine embassy in Japan was reported to have been receiving complaints from Japanese people about the Philippine government's perceived inaction over the matter.

Berg Corp. has been named last year as the winning bidder to develop the two properties in Kobe.

But the implementation of the contract was hampered by accusations that the awarding was a midnight deal crafted by the company and Malacañang for election purposes.

Former Vice President Teofisto Guingona earlier said the plan did not go through a public hearing, which should have been done considering that the Japan properties are historic and patrimonial in character.

Some senators also questioned the government's move to lease the pieces of property without congressional approval.

But the Department of Foreign Affairs, a member of the inter-agency committee tasked with leasing the Japan properties, responded that build-lease-transfer contracts were only developmental in nature, and therefore need not get congressional approval.

Recto said the government has already identified the winning bidder to develop the Philippine property in Nampaidai.

The company, however, has not been formally awarded the contract because the recommendation to award the bid, which will be submitted to Malacañang, is still being finalized. *Michelle V. Remo*

Explore Xiamen

XIAMEN is a beautiful coastal city in the southeast Chinese province of Fujian. It boasts of its clean and tidy environment, unique landscape and picturesque views. It is also dubbed as "China's coziest city".

Nature at its Finest

Xiamen has numerous parks, hills, waters, temples and gardens that comprise a most adorable picture. The city is famous for its botanical gardens hosting tropical and subtropical plants. Its unique folk customs and the many historical sites are magnetic to visitors.

Xiamen is also known as the "Garden by the Sea" with beautiful beaches whose attractiveness is comparable to the famous Hawaii.

Sights to Behold

Egret Islet Park

A 10-hectare development built along a lake right at the heart of Xiamen City. A leisure, entertainment and shopping destination where the Goddess of Egret Statue is located.

Gulangyu Island

A picturesque collection of colonial buildings joined together by cobblestone streets. The mesmerizing statue of General Zheng Chenggong, the historical figure who expelled the Dutch from Taiwan can be found in this island of golden beaches.

Piano Museum

China's largest piano museums is in Gulangyu. It guides visitors through the history of the instrument with a display of different pianos, including miniature, automatic, accordion and round-shaped pianos.

Nan Pu Tuo

The temple is a breathtaking view of the city and the harbour where thousands of old Buddha Statues left behind by pilgrims since the Tang Dynasty can be seen.

Jinmen Island Boat Tour

Situated at the mouth of Amoy Bay, it brings visitors 3,600 meters off shore close enough to view the Taiwanese fortifications in the island.

Ultimate Shopping Experience

Bailu Zhou Arts and Craft Corporation

A vast shopping center filled with 300 vendors from all over China. Buyers can find antique and classic Chinese items.

Foreign Trade Group Arts and Crafts Product Import and Export Company

Very popular with tourists for its quality home products such as, wicker baskets, bamboo curtains and antiques. Stamps, pearls and other souvenirs add diversity into this unique store.

Xiamen Cultural Relics Store

The city's largest arts and crafts market where vendors sell fine porcelain, bronze statues, hand-woven linens and coveted Qing vases.

Zhongshan Road

The busiest thoroughfare in the city which features everything from boutiques offering the latest fashion trends, books, music, local art and restaurants as well. This road leads to the promenade, which has ferry access to Gulangyu Island.

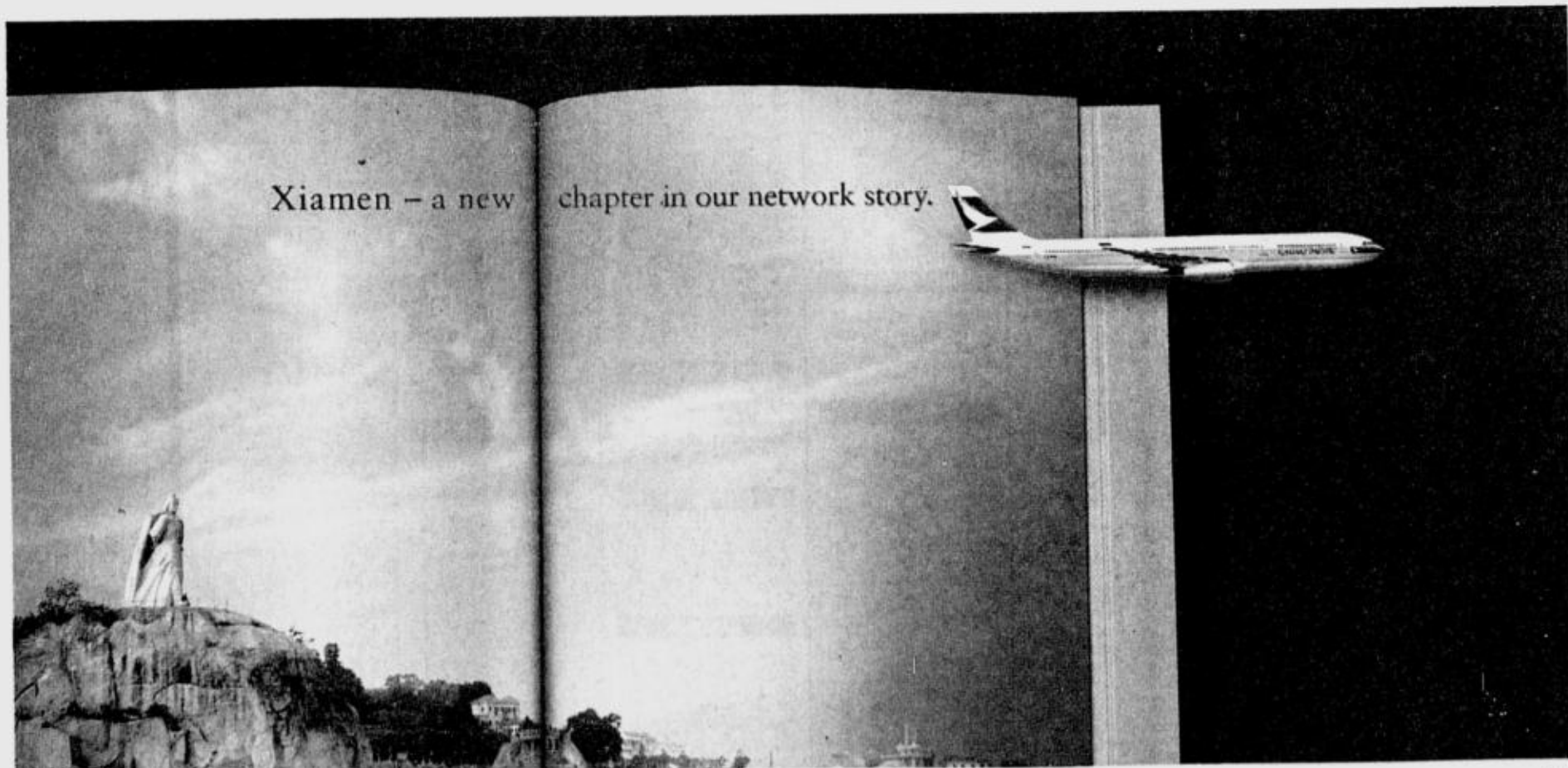
Delicious Cuisine

Xiamen is famous for its exquisite cuisine, and abounds in seafood all year round. Lobsters, crabs, abalones and snails are fresh and of the best quality. Fruits are available in all four seasons. Local fruits include longan, banana, pineapple, orange, watermelon, mango, peach and Chinese flowering quince.

Xiamen cuisine is best enjoyed with a pot of Oolong tea which originated from this city. This very fragrant tea is comparable to the taste and aroma of plums and other fresh fruits.

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Oil holds above \$51, consumer concern grows

NEW YORK—Oil held above \$51 a barrel on Friday despite fresh warnings from big consuming nations that economic growth may suffer from a renewed rise in fuel costs.

A commodity-wide influx of speculative fund money has helped pump up oil prices by \$6 over the past two weeks, driven by a weak dollar as well as a late-winter cold spell and forecasts for tightening

market conditions this year. US oil prices settled up 10 cents to \$51.49 a barrel, after climbing to \$52.05 on Thursday, the highest since Nov. 1. Brent crude rose 17 cents to \$49.61.

Dealers shrugged off news of rising US crude stockpiles to focus on Saudi Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi's forecast that oil would stay between \$40 and \$50 for the rest of

this year, a signal the Opec cartel might be happy with such levels.

In the past, members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec), which controls about 40 percent of global exports, had said they viewed \$50 as too high.

Sustained global growth has backed up the view that consuming nations can weather higher

costs, but consuming nations are growing increasingly anxious as prices close in on last year's record \$55.67 peak.

US Treasury Secretary John Snow said he was not happy "one bit" with oil prices, while the head of the International Energy Agency told Reuters high oil prices would hold back economic growth.

"The price is extremely high. It is

unreasonable and we have said for some time that it will hurt the economy," said Claude Mandil, head of the IEA, which advises industrialized nations on energy policy.

"I don't think that all the noise being made on prices staying high for all this year is very helpful. I hope producers refrain from saying that prices should remain at this level."

Despite fears Opec may now harbor a higher price target, the cartel has backed away from plans to cut supply for the second quarter, when consumption traditionally eases following the northern winter.

Venezuela and Indonesia both came out in favor of leaving output limits steady when the group meets in Iran on March 16. *Reuters*



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LA 79sqm. FA 1,300,000
LA 109sqm. FA 1,365,000

Antipolo City

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HOUSE & LOT
LA 102sqm. FA 56sqm. P 850,000
LA 101sqm. FA 70sqm. P 915,000
LA 101sqm. FA 60sqm. P 950,000
LA 96sqm. FA 70sqm. P 960,000
LA 101sqm. FA 80sqm. P 1,000,000
LA 133sqm. FA 80sqm. P 1,135,000
LA 120sqm. FA 80sqm. P 1,200,000
LA 88sqm. FA 97sqm. P 1,300,000
LA 191sqm. FA 80sqm. P 1,500,000
LA 126sqm. FA 92sqm. P 1,600,000

Antipolo City

COTONWOODS HEIGHTS

HOUSE & LOT
LA 263sqm. FA 116sqm. P 2,100,000
LA 243sqm. FA 229sqm. P 2,250,000
LA 266sqm. FA 136sqm. P 2,700,000
LA 340sqm. FA 147sqm. P 3,100,000
LA 491sqm. FA 168sqm. P 3,600,000

Dasmariñas, Cavite

LA MEDITERREANEA

HOUSE & LOT
LA 99sqm. FA 70sqm. P 675,000
LA 118sqm. FA 72sqm. P 690,000
LA 122sqm. FA 84sqm. P 1,170,000
LA 126sqm. FA 80sqm. P 1,230,000
LA 130sqm. FA 83sqm. P 1,430,000
LA 242sqm. FA 83sqm. P 1,475,000

Sin Rosa, Laguna

BREEZEVIEW

RESIDENTIAL LOT
539sqm. P 3,000,000
546sqm. P 3,500,000
813sqm. P 3,700,000
711sqm. P 4,300,000
741sqm. P 4,500,000
821sqm. P 5,000,000

Sin Rosa, Laguna

PARADISE VILLA

RESIDENTIAL LOT
194sqm. P 1,000,000
232sqm. P 1,300,000
276sqm. P 1,500,000
276sqm. P 1,500,000
335sqm. P 2,300,000

San Pedro, Laguna

LA MARINA

HOUSE & LOT
LA 120sqm. FA 64sqm. P 1,225,000
LA 118sqm. FA 64sqm. P 1,300,000
LA 120sqm. FA 91sqm. P 1,310,000
LA 128sqm. FA 91sqm. P 1,395,000
LA 135sqm. FA 74sqm. P 1,400,000
LA 373sqm. FA 82sqm. P 3,056,000

Argentina debt restructuring reaches end

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina—Argentina sought to complete the biggest debt restructuring in history on Friday, hoping to end its status as an international financial pariah three years after the country's devastating economic crisis.

Friday marked the deadline for investors holding some \$103 billion in defaulted Argentine debt to accept a government offer to pay back a third of their original investment—the worst losses for holders of government bonds in recent history.

The effort to end a legacy of Argentina's 2001-2002 financial upheaval has left investors infuriated, but the country spent months exhorting a majority of its creditors—including banks and thousands of individual investors—to accept the deal.

President Nestor Kirchner, who has invoked a take-it-or-leave-it stance that has led some angry bondholders to file lawsuits, predicted Friday that the offer would be a success.

With the government offer expiring later Friday, most analysts expect at least 70 percent of investors will accept the deal, partly out of sheer exhaustion after more than two years of often-acrimonious talks.

That level of acceptance, most analysts say, will effectively propel Argentina out of default, overcoming one of the largest obstacles to an economic recovery that began last year.

Argentina, South America's second-largest economy, halted payment on its public debt in late December 2001 after days of deadly street riots and political unrest.

At the height of the crisis, the government also froze bank accounts and devalued the currency in a move that suddenly erased huge chunks of people's savings and pushed nearly half of the country into poverty.

Now the government needs to win back the confidence of creditors to have any hope of maintaining the recovery. The economy expanded by 8.8 percent last year for a second straight year of growth.

The renewed growth has caused some investors to call on Argentina to improve its offer, but Kirchner has dismissed the calls, arguing a larger payout could threaten the country's two-year economic recovery and siphon off funds for badly needed social programs. *AP*

Wall St. awaits key US reports

NEW YORK—US stock investors will look this week at the Chicago purchasing managers' index and the February payrolls report to assess the economy's health, strategists and traders said.

Tensions in the Middle East also will get renewed attention on Wall Street after a fatal bombing outside a Tel Aviv nightclub shattered a de facto truce by militants, which had raised hopes for peace.

On Friday, both the blue-chip Dow Jones industrial average and the broad Standard & Poor's 500 index hit fresh closing highs for the year, topping off a three-day rally.

The gains put the Dow back on positive ground for 2005—up 0.54 percent.

Friday's stock market advance was driven by oil companies' shares, including Exxon Mobil Corp., hitting lifetime highs as crude oil futures prices climbed closer to \$52 a barrel.

"I think we will have an up week," said Andre J. Bakhos, president of Princeton Financial Group. "What could trip up the scenario is the econometric numbers. It's a big week for the economic numbers and that could tilt the scales."

This week, two closely watched US economic reports will serve as bookends.

On Monday, the National Association of Purchasing Management-Chicago will release its closely watched reading on the Midwestern region's economy for February.

On Friday, the Labor Department's report on February US non-farm payrolls will come out.

If the numbers exceed expectations, that should give the stock market more fuel to run higher, analysts said.

Although the market didn't react much, it got some welcome news early on Friday when the Commerce Department said growth in US gross domestic product, which measures total output of goods and services within US borders, was stronger in the fourth quarter than previously thought.

For the week, the Dow rose 0.52 percent, the S&P 500 advanced 0.81 percent, and the Nasdaq Composite Index edged up 0.33 percent.

On Friday, the February employment report will give investors a sense of the labor market's strength. *Reuters*

CALOOCAN

RCBC2_SB001 - VACANT LOT
LA 672sqm.
Munoz Rd, Canarin Rd, Nova
Min. Bid Price: P 785,000

RCBC2_SB002 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 83sqm. FA 46sqm.
LA B2 Tierra Nova, Royale Subd.
Min. Bid Price: P 550,000

RCBC2_SB003 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 145sqm. FA 27sqm.
Padron St, Tierra Nova, Royale Subd.
Minimum Bid Price: P 800,000

RCBC1_SB005 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 50sqm. FA 36sqm.
B19 L6 & L8 Palmera Spring
Min. Bid Price: P 620,000

RCBC1_SB006 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 96sqm. FA 67sqm.
B7 L10 Palmera Spring
Min. Bid Price: P 750,000

RCBC1_SB007 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 50sqm. FA 40sqm.
B13 L4 Whispering Palms
Min. Bid Price: P 900,000

RCBC1_SB008 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 100sqm. FA 60sqm.
B6 L7 Whispering Palms
Min. Bid Price: P 540,000

RCBC1_SB009 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 226sqm. FA 200sqm.
B4 L25 Pleasant View Subd.
Min. Bid Price: P 2,450,000

RCBC1_SB010 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 216sqm. FA 175sqm.
B1 L17 Hicrest Subd.
Min. Bid Price: P 2,250,000

RCBC1_SB011 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 153sqm. FA 70sqm.
20 Athens Vista Verde North
Min. Bid Price: P 1,020,000

MALABON

RCBC1_SB012 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 498sqm. FA 80sqm.
L2 M. Blas St, Halong Duhut
Min. Bid Price: P 1,560,000

MARIKINA

RCBC2_SB013 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 420sqm. FA 310sqm.
Twinville Subd.
Min. Bid Price: P 3,500,000

MUNTINLUPA

RCBC2_SB014 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 154sqm. FA 135sqm.
L2 B12 Lakeshore Dr.
Lakeshore Homes
Min. Bid Price: P 1,800,000

RCBC2_SB015 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 129sqm. FA 85sqm.
B75 Esperanza Compound, Palatan
Min. Bid Price: P 400,000

RCBC2_SB016 - RSD LOT
LA 312sqm.
L11 B5 Orchids St.
S. Greenhill Subd.
Min. Bid Price: P 900,000

RCBC2_SB017 - RSD/COMML BLDG.
LA 768sqm. FA 585sqm.
247 Int. Morillano St, Alabang
Min. Bid Price: P 4,600,000

PARANAQUE

RCBC2_SB018 - RSD LOT
LA 331sqm.
L3 B10 Everlasting cor., Violet St.
Marcelo Green Vill.
Min. Bid Price: P 1,750,000

PASIG CITY

RCBC1_SB019 - RSD LOT
LA 150sqm.
L11 B14 Anita St.
Christine Royale Garden
Min. Bid Price: P 750,000

RCBC1_SB023 - HOUSE & LOT

LA 109sqm. FA 150sqm.
B10 L1-A Bulok Subd. Fairview
Min. Bid Price: P 1,715,000

RCBC1_SB024 - RSD LOT
LA 150.7sqm.
L9 Merry Homes Fairview
Min. Bid Price: P 1,275,000

RCBC1_SB025 - RSD LOT
LA 72.5sqm.
L9-A-2 Dahlia Exec. Homes
Fairview
Min. Bid Price: P 960,000

RCBC1_SB026 - RSD LOT
LA 325sqm.
1428 North Susana Exec. Vill.
Min. Bid Price: P 3,080,000

RCBC1_SB027 - RSD LOT
LA 73sqm.
L8-D Jem 3 Subd. Banlat
Min. Bid Price: P 1,150,000

RCBC1_SB028 - TOWNHOMES
LA 29.75sqm.
Unit 15 Villa Andrea Townhomes
Min. Bid Price: P 4,210,000

RCBC1_SB029 - TOWNHOMES
LA 60sqm.
Unit 6 Adella 5 Park Townhomes
Min. Bid Price: P 1,800,000

RCBC1_SB030 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 378sqm. FA 642sqm.
23 Pineview, Greenview Exec. Subd.
Min. Bid Price: P 9,280,000

RCBC1_SB031 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 50sqm. FA 60sqm.
Century Homes, Novales
Min. Bid Price: P 780,000

RCBC2_SB032 - RSD LOT
LA 500sqm.
Squid Olympics Ave., Jordan
Plains, Nova
Min. Bid Price: P 700,000

RCBC1_SB033 - RSD LOT
LA 212sqm.
B15 L2 Maytown Circle, Nova
Min. Bid Price: P 2,300,000

RCBC1_SB034 - RSD LOT
LA 79.3sqm.
11 Canina DRJ Subd. Sauyo, Nova
Min. Bid Price: P 1,020,000

RCBC1_SB035 - RSD LOT
LA 400sqm.
#29 Susana St., Gulod Nova
Min. Bid Price: P 920,000

RCBC1_SB040 - RSD LOT W.
IMPRVMT
LA 65sqm.
Unit 10 Varsity Hills
Min. Bid Price: P 3,530,000

RCBC1_SB041 - RSD LOT
LA 110sqm.
#18 Angat St., Napocor Village TS
Min. Bid Price: P 1,200,000

RCBC1_SB042 - TOWNHOUSE
LA 81.8sqm. FA 76sqm.
Unit 9 Aga Comp TS
Min. Bid Price: P 1,350,000

GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN

RCBC1_SB043 - RSD CONDO
LA 690sqm. FA 220sqm.
Unit D 24/F Eisenhower, Goldland,
Greenhills
Min. Bid Price: P 2,360,000

RCBC1_SB044 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 310sqm. FA 350sqm.
218 18th St., Fortune Village
Min. Bid Price: P 4,530,000

RCBC1_SB045 - RSD LOT
LA 247sqm.
233 20th St., Fortune Village
Min. Bid Price: P 2,660,000

VALENZUELA

RCBC1_SB046 - COMM. LOT
LA 949.8sqm.
203 McArthur Karuhutan
Min. Bid Price: P 18,840,000

RCBC2_SB059 - RSD LOT

LA 1,030sqm.
Mestizo Hills
Min. Bid Price: P 4,000,000

RCBC2_SB060 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 172sqm. FA 200sqm.
397 Dela Virgen St., San Isidro,
Poblacion
Min. Bid Price: P 1,000,000

RCBC1_SB064 - RSD LOT
LA 2,415sqm.
B14 L17 Victoria Valley
Min. Bid Price: P 3,860,000

RCBC1_SB065 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 170sqm. FA 60sqm.
B7 L7, 9 & 11 Lommar Exec.
Min. Bid Price: P 2,525,000

RCBC1_SB066 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 156sqm. FA 76sqm.
B7 L1 Crashow
Min. Bid Price: P 990,000

BULACAN

RCBC2_SB067 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 116sqm. FA 38sqm.
L35 B24 Palmera Homes 2A, So.
Crislo, SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 400,000

RCBC2_SB068 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 44sqm. FA 34sqm.
L6 B31 Alley 16 Northridge Subd.,
Sto. Cristo, SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 150,000

RCBC2_SB069 - RSD LOT
LA 480sqm.
Eucalyptus St., Greenplains
Subd., Calumpit
Min. Bid Price: P 1,600,000

RCBC2_SB070 - COMM. LOT
LA 2,471sqm.
Burd 1st, Bagatgas
Min. Bid Price: P 20,000,000

RCBC2_SB071 - IND. WAREHOUSE
LA 845sqm. FA 809sqm.
RIS Industrial Complex, Mercado
St. Crispin
Min. Bid Price: P 6,200,000

RCBC2_SB072 - RSD LOT
LA 1,683sqm.
Barrio Sto. Rosario, Malolos
Min. Bid Price: P 5,000,000

RCBC2_SB073 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 143sqm. FA 25sqm.
La Poblacion Dr. SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 360,000

RCBC2_SB074 - RSD LOT
LA 5,497sqm.
Barrio Mabab, Malolos
Min. Bid Price: P 5,500,000

RCBC1_SB075 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 204.28sqm. FA 110sqm.
F. Estrella St., Malolos
Min. Bid Price: P 1,520,000

RCBC1_SB076 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 207sqm. FA 60sqm.
B9 Sumangpang Bata, Malolos
Min. Bid Price: P 1,000,000

RCBC2_SB077 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 764sqm. FA 132sqm.
Lot 573 Agnaya, Plaridel
Min. Bid Price: P 3,285,000

RCBC1_SB078 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 45sqm. FA 23sqm.
569 Parulan, Plaridel
Min. Bid Price: P 1,000,000

RCBC1_SB079 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 540sqm. FA 200sqm.
5666 Mary Grace Subd. Sto. Nilo,
Plaridel
Min. Bid Price: P 2,130,000

RCBC1_SB080 - RSD LOT
LA 3,058sqm.
Lot 3004 C Camagyanan, Sta. Maria
Min. Bid Price: P 2,420,000

RCBC1_SB081 - HOUSE & LOT

LA 1,708sqm. FA 100sqm.
218 Uwasan San Vicente, Sta. Maria
Min. Bid Price: P 2,500,000

RCBC1_SB087 - HOUSE & LOT

LA 285sqm. FA 76sqm.
147 Buntis St., Bacoor
Min. Bid Price: P 2,200,000

RCBC1_SB088 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 1,402sqm. FA 80sqm.
Sapang Palay SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 11,800,000

RCBC1_SB090 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 35sqm. FA 20sqm.
B14 L19 Carissa Homes SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 290,000

RCBC1_SB091 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 35sqm. FA 27sqm.
B32 L25 Carissa Homes SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 120,000

RCBC1_SB092 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 60sqm. FA 25sqm.
B3 L8 Carissa Homes SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 225,000

RCBC1_SB093 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 35sqm. FA 27sqm.
B32 L25 Carissa Homes SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 120,000

RCBC1_SB094 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 50sqm. FA 30sqm.
B28 L49 Carissa Homes SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 325,000

RCBC1_SB095 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 79sqm. FA 56sqm.
B3 L28 Northwinds City SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 400,000

RCBC1_SB096 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 70sqm. FA 22.5sqm.
B9 L2 Northridge Exec. SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 340,000

RCBC1_SB099 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 1,528sqm. FA 305sqm.
229 Manatlat Pandi
Min. Bid Price: P 5,960,000

RCBC1_SB100 - HOUSE & LOT
LA 70sqm. FA 20sqm.
B5 L13 La Poblacion SJDM
Min. Bid Price: P 170,000

US growth figures revised up on stronger exports

WASHINGTON—US economic momentum at the end of 2004 was significantly stronger than previously thought, according to a government report on Friday revising up fourth-quarter output to reflect stronger exports and investment.

The Commerce Department said gross domestic product, the gauge of total goods and services production within US borders, grew at a revised 3.8 percent annual rate in the final three months of last year instead of 3.1 percent reported a month ago.

That was only slightly below the third quarter's 4 percent pace and left the economy poised for a healthy start to 2005.

Nearly half the fourth-quarter revision stemmed from a stronger trade performance, reflecting more robust exports than previously thought.

Statistics Canada corrected a \$1.4 billion error in underestimating US exports to Canada during November, and later data also showed the US trade deficit for December narrowed more than had been anticipated.

Despite the fourth-quarter revision, there was no change in the government's calculation that GDP grew 4.4 percent in 2004, ahead of a 3-percent increase in

2003 and the strongest for any year since 1999, when it expanded 4.5 percent.

Financial markets strengthened on the news, with the blue-chip Dow Jones industrial average rising 92.81 points, or 0.86 percent, to end at 10,841.60—a fresh 2005 closing high.

The tech-laced Nasdaq Composite Index was up 13.70 points, or 0.67 percent, to end at 2,065.40.

Bonds also rose in price, anticipating that steady expansion will keep interest rates rising and drive up yields.

A separate report from the National Association of Realtors, a trade group, on Friday said sales of single-family homes eased 0.1 percent in January but still were running at healthy levels.

Sales were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 6.8 million last month, the seventh best rate on record as relatively low mortgage rates apparently continued to support the nation's housing markets.

The GDP report indicated inflation was perking up. A price index favored by Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan—personal spending minus food and energy costs—increased at a 1.6 percent

annual rate that was close to twice the 0.9 percent gain recorded in the third quarter.

Businesses kept up a brisk pace of new investment.

Nonresidential investment climbed at a revised 14 percent rate instead of 10.3 percent re-

ported a month ago and was ahead of the third quarter's 13 percent.

Spending on new equipment and computer software increased 18 percent after growing 17.5 percent in the third quarter.

But growth in consumer

spending was revised down modestly to 4.2 percent from a previously reported 4.6 percent rise in the fourth quarter and was less vigorous than the third quarter's 5.1 percent gain.

Most analysts believe the economy has enough strength to keep ex-

panding at around a 4-percent annual rate in the first half of 2005.

The Federal Reserve has been gradually ratcheting interest rates up, aiming to bring them to more normal levels as expansion from a downturn in 2001 is extended.

Reuters

Reconsider bankruptcy bid, Yukos urges judge

WASHINGTON—Embattled Russian oil company Yukos has asked a US judge to reconsider its bankruptcy petition and grant a new trial.

Attorneys for Yukos also asked for a stay of the dismissal "while it pursues its post-judgment remedies."

Clark's ruling Thursday dealt a massive blow to Yukos, which is struggling to save its remaining assets from the state in the face of a tax bill that now dwarfs the market capitalization of what was once Russia's number one oil exporter.

Clark had argued that US courts lack jurisdiction in the case.

"The vast majority of the business and financial activities of Yukos continue to occur in Russia. Such activities require the continued participation of the Russian government," she wrote.

"The sheer size of Yukos, and correspondingly, its impact on the entirety of the Russian economy, weighs heavily in favor of allowing resolution in a forum in which participation of the Russian government is assured."

Yukos filed for bankruptcy protection in Texas on Dec. 14 in a bid

to keep the Russian government from selling off its core assets.

The Russian government seized control of Yukos bank accounts late last year, and the group's main asset, Yuganskneftegaz, ended up in the hands of a state-controlled oil company through a disputed auction.

Yugansk alone produced as much oil as the US state of Texas and was responsible for more than 60 percent of Yukos' output.

Yukos shares now trade under a dollar on the Moscow exchange. Their value had been in the \$32-range before the arrest of the company's founder Mikhail Khodorkovsky on fraud charges in October 2003.

Although the government justified its actions on the grounds of a \$24.5-billion bill for unpaid taxes, many observers said the pursuit of Yukos was retribution for Khodorkovsky funding opposition political parties.

Yugansk was sold for less than \$10 billion to the state oil company Rosneft, despite a US judge's injunction against the sale.

The Houston court ruling clears the way for the merger of Rosneft and Russia's giant Gazprom. AFP

Holcim profit up in 2004

ZURICH—The world's second-biggest cement maker, Holcim, is expected to report a rise in full-year profit Wednesday after higher cement prices and efficiency gains more than outweighed growth in raw material costs, analysts said.

Holcim is benefiting from a pick-up in cement demand in North America and parts of Europe on the back of the economic recovery. Its 2004 net income is seen up 3 percent at an estimated 944 million Swiss francs (\$813 million), according to the average forecast in a Reuters poll of six analysts.

Operating income is seen at 2.2 billion francs, compared to 1.9 billion in 2003, on sales of 13.28 billion.

Holcim said it expected to clearly exceed its target of 8 percent internal growth for operating profit in 2004 and forecast "substantially stronger results," helped by an improved market environment in North America. AP

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People, Events & Products

GMA welcomes Korean investors

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo expressed elation recently over the decision of Enter Tech Corp, Korea's leading technology developers of family entertainment systems, to put up a compact karaoke microphone factory in the country with an initial investment of \$5 million.

The President thanked Enter Tech Corp, led by its president Kyung Ho Lee, for choosing the Philippines as its next investment hub in manufacturing the famous Magic Sing Along, the most innovative compact karaoke microphone.

"Thank you for choosing the Philippines. The Filipinos love to sing and 90 percent of Filipinos sing well," she said.

The President told the Korean investors during a brief courtesy call on her at the Malacanang's Study Room recently that the Philippines is a convenient location for business investments in Asia.

She said the Korean venture would be an important investment for Filipinos who really

love to sing.

Lee told the President they intended to build their manufacturing plant along Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) in Makati City. It is set to start operations within the year.

Enter Tech Corp, established in 1994, specializes in developing compact video karaoke systems and their components such as Mifi, transmitters, Asic (application specific integrated circuit) and wireless microphones.

Magic Sing Along is the most advanced multimedia karaoke system compacted into a single microphone where both visual and audio functions of a bulky karaoke machine are built into a single microphone with interchangeable microchips.

Also present during the brief courtesy call were Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson and Kun Tae Kim, vice president of Enter Tech Philippines, and Shin Wan Kim, executive vice president.



SHOWN is President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo flanked by Rep. Eric D. Singson and Kyung Ho Lee, president of Enter Tech Co (Korea). Also shown are Ju Youn Sin, Shin Wan Kim, Mee Hee Park and Kun Tae Kim.

Japanese exec leads investment group

AKIHISA

Nakabayashi, president of Koshi Trust Co Ltd, a well-known business leader in Tokyo, Japan, with immense holdings in real estate development, banking and finance and funding conglomerates, was in Manila Feb. 12 on the first leg of an Asian business tour together with other prominent Japanese investors such as Kenji Akiba, president of K-Finder Co Ltd, a top car dealer based in Tokyo, and Katsuhiko Todaka, president of Marks Consul Co Ltd,



NAKABAYASHI

a finance consulting firm, to look into other prospects for overseas investment in the Philippines as well as other countries in Southeast Asia.

Lawyer Ernesto V. Villagarcia, chief legal counsel and investment consultant to various local and foreign entities, and president of Nipphil Multi-Ventures Inc, a consortium of Philippine-Japan capital partnership representing RP interests, said the Nakabayashi group is spearheading the pioneering moves and

strategies to boost the ongoing negotiations for the immediate adoption of the Japan-Philippines Free Trade Agreement (JPFTA), a mutual trade covenant agreed upon between Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo early this year in Vientiane, Laos.

Nakabayashi, for his part, averred that "such accord will open and bridge the bilateral trade relations between RP and Japan towards a mutually benefi-



VILLAGARCIA

cial understanding and reciprocity on various concerns and interests such as private corporate funding, real property development, import and export, trading, service-oriented enterprises, infrastructures and asset management."

The group met with President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacanang for the presentation of their pledge of support vis-à-vis the ongoing trade accords and their commitment to pursue and boost the RP-Japan agree-



BERT LINA APPOINTED BOC COMMISSIONER

Newly appointed BOC Commissioner Bert Lina is joined by Department of Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima in the oath-taking

rites at the official turnover ceremonies at the Bureau of Customs. Looking on is outgoing BOC Commissioner George Jereos.

Kimbells among world's best in world label competition

FRESH from a string of successes in three recently concluded international label competitions, Kimbells Pack further strengthened its reputation as one of the leading names in the global map of design and construction of labels after its perennial winning label Tanduay Rum 1854 was adjudged among the "best of the best" by the World Label Association (WLA) as the year started.

In a letter to Kimbells Pack president and CEO Henry Tiu, Anthony R. White, WLA chair of judges, announced that its Tanduay Rum 1854 label once again won an award in the Offset Line and Screen/Tone category.

"It is a great achievement to win a World Award as your entry was judged against the top class entries from all over the world including Europe, Japan and Australia. The names of the winners will be published in many trade journals worldwide," White stated.

Prior to this, the winning label gained recognition at the recently concluded 27th annual awards com-

petition of the Tag and Label Manufacturers Institute (TLMi), North America's leading trade association serving the tag and label industry and established more than 70 years ago. It won along with three other entries-Tanduay Primiero Ron 8 Anos, Careline Party Colours Nail Polish and RDL BabyFace Facial Cleanser.

Aside from TLMi, Kimbells also won awards recently in two other international label competitions sponsored by Europe-based Finat and Latma in Australia.

Envisioned to eventually become the umbrella organization worldwide of similar bodies, WLA was established just 10 years ago by Finat and TLMi, considered as two of the largest regional associations in the global industry. Since then, other regional or national associations such as those of Japan and Russia have followed suit, adding to its global significance.

As membership grew, WLA-spon-

sored competition also grew in stature, making it the single most prestigious event in the world of labels. To date, the World Label Competition (WLC) is the only one of its kind that accepts entries selected by the participating associations from the winners in their own competition. This way, it is ensured that WLC becomes a competition of the "best of the best". This year alone, 70 entries from five continents vied for honors in 26 categories.

This year's winners will be recognized in ceremonies to be held during TLMi Converter's Meeting on March 5 at Marquitz Los Cabos Resort in Mexico City.

Tiu expressed elation over this latest award for his company and dedicated it primarily to the Filipino people. He said Kimbells would continue to pursue excellence in its label designs in order to meet world-class standards and remain globally competitive, thus making a name for the Philippines in the world map of labels.



THE BEST IN PLASMA PLEASURES NOW AT GREENHILLS

Plasma Pleasures, the first and only Plasma and LCD TV exhibit in the country, brings in the latest, the biggest and the flattest Plasma TVs, LCD TVs, Projection TVs for 2005, this time at the popular Greenhills Shopping Center. Presented by Automatic Centre, the country's leading consumer brands showcases over 50 of the best products from Feb. 11 to March 6. Participating brands are AOC, Audiovox-AR, Hitachi, JVC, Kolin-Syntax,

LG, Philips, Panasonic, Pioneer, Samsung, Sharp, Sony and Toshiba. At the opening ceremonies were (from left) Roe Quiambao, LG marketing services manager; KC Montero, MTV-Philippines VJ/TV personality; Tessie Tan, BPI Card senior vice president; Begonia Ortigas, wife of lawyer Rafael Ortigas, president, Ortigas & Co; Mia Chua, AVP-Automatic Centre; and Jeff Hong, president, LG Electronics Philippines.

UN ENVOY'S WIFE VOTED ALC NEW YORK PRESIDENT

Norma C. Baja, wife of Ambassador Lauro L. Baja Jr, the Philippines' permanent representative to the United Nations, has been elected president of the Asean Ladies' Circle (ALC), New York Chapter. Norma is past president of ALC Philippines and is also the incumbent president of the Department of Foreign Affairs Ladies Foundation (DFALF) New York Chapter. ALC is composed of the wives of permanent representatives and Ambassadors of the Asean member countries Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Norma is also a member of the executive committee of the UN Delegates Wives Club and is chair of one of its committees. She also participates in activities of the Asia Pacific women's associations. She was also unanimously chosen to be honorary chair of the Philippine Independence Ball committee, which will be held at the New York Hilton on June 11, to celebrate Philippine Independence Day. Norma is shown (left) with Nane Annan, wife of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.



eBAY NOW IN THE PHILIPPINES

Frederic de Bure, managing director for eBay Hong Kong, Singapore, and now the Philippines, briefs the press about eBay's new Philippine site, eBay.ph, which was launched at Gilligan's Island Restaurant and Bar in Makati recently. eBay is the world's largest

online marketplace founded in 1995, and which presently has 125 million registered users worldwide trading in 50,000 categories. The new website eBay.ph will now allow Filipino users to sell and bid for several items in Philippine pesos 'free of charge.'

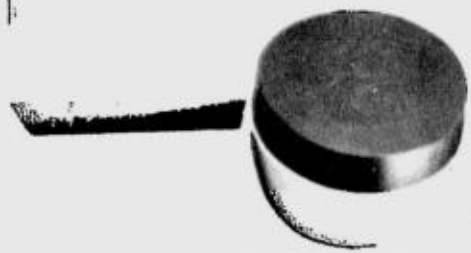
ProductFiles

Ellen's whitening cream phenomenon

ONE OF the leading aesthetic centers has just launched its in-demand Ellen's Miracle Whitening Cream that whitens skin in just a week.

This product is said to be researched and developed by Filipino chemists and targets the hidden dark spots of the body: the groin, nape and underarm. It also whitens pimple scars and freckles. Ellen's Miracle Whitening Cream is not just an ordinary whitening cream, it is proven safe and effective. Most users have been pleasantly surprised on its immediate effect.

Ellen's Miracle Whitening Cream is available at all Ellen's Aesthetic Centers nation-



wide. For details, call 374-6665 (Manila), 046-4176891 (Cavite), 045-9611529 (Pampanga), 045-9828793 (Tarlac) and 047-2248959 (Olongapo).

Citibank perks

GET THE best of Cebu's dining scene with Citibank credit cards' generous dining discounts and coolest perks. Ongoing until Feb. 28, enjoy the fine accommodations of Shangri-La Mactan and get 10 percent off on food and beverages. Awaken your spirits at Café Georg in Bantilad and get a free cup of americano or a glass of iced tea for a P300 purchase. Dine with friends at East West Café in Ayala Center Cebu and receive a free rocky road crepe for a minimum P500 purchase. For more offers and details, call 995-9999 in Metro Manila or 234-9999 in Metro Cebu.

MFI scholarships

THE MERALCO Foundation Institute

(MFI) is in need of scholars for the first year in the Industrial Technician Program (ITP) come June 2005. The scholarship slots are for 150 poor but deserving high school graduates, 16 to 22 years old, and passed the entrance exams. Applicants are now accepted at MFI's Ortigas Campus everyday, including Saturdays, during office hours, until March 15. Scholarship benefits include 100-percent free tuition, free uniforms, and free materials and supplies for all school projects. For more information, inquire from the MFI registrar at MFI Building, Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City, or call 632-0756 to 67.

Outstanding Filipinos

THE PARANGAL ng Bayan Foundation Inc's search for outstanding Filipino

achievers in various fields of endeavors has been extended until Feb. 28. It features the prestigious Parangal ng Bayan Award in the following categories: law and judiciary, government and public service, media, arts and culture, sports, entrepreneurship, medicine and allied sciences, science and technology, education, agriculture and forestry. All entries or nominations must be submitted to any of the following: e-mail to parangalng-bayan@yahoo.com; hand-carried to 405 United Nations Avenue corner Roxas Boulevard, Ermita, Manila (Inside ET Dizon Travel Co); or faxed at 526-4096. For inquiries, call the Parangal ng Bayan secretariat at 404-2302 or 404-2818.



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 204m² @P8.5M 09189235216

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 Ideal for gas station/School
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BAGUO

Grand ParkPlace 216sqm
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OTHER AREAS

300m² 5Yrs 0% Int 6286238

OTHER AREAS

Tagaytay w/low 489700sqm be-
 tween Sta.Rosa/Rolonda P6900
 /sqm 8896039;6475;4796

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 House
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 m² • Price Neg.T 9908618

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QUEZON CITY

W. PLAINS SUBD. 597m² 5BR
 5TB 4CG DB only 6330164

CONDO/TWNHSE

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ORIENTAL GARDEN CONDO
 2BR, FF, Chino Rocas Ave.,
 Makati 0916-5063803

MANILA

ASTRAL TOWER 1st PGH 1br
 15Tmo. 09215049978;6311596

QUEZON CITY

4rent 4BR 4TB w/Attic
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CARS

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KALOOKAN
LOT 1 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 720 sqm.
Lot 3439, Gen. Mascando Bagong
Barrio
Minimum Bid Price: 7,000,000

LOT 2 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 474 sqm.
Floor Area: various
Lot 6, Bk. 4, Morning Glory cor.
Easter Lily St., BF Homes Subd.,
Phase III, Deparo
Minimum Bid Price: 1,370,000

LAS PINAS
LOT 3 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 971 sqm.
No. 3 San Andres Caraway
Minimum Bid Price: 20,250,000

LOT 4 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 6,463 sqm.
Lot 61-B, B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4 & L 60,
B 1, Padre Sierra Ave (Quirino
Ave.) Natl. Rd. Pulang Lupa
Minimum Bid Price: 72,741,000

MAKATI CITY
CONDO-UNIT
2/F Pacific Star Bldg. G. Puyat
Ave. cor. Makah Ave
LOT 5 - Unit 2705
Floor Area: 268.22 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 11,333,000

LOT 6 - Unit 2705
Floor Area: 262.6 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 11,095,000

MALABON
LOT 7 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 786 sqm.
Floor Area: 555.7 sqm.
No. 1 Dabala corner White Lily
Street, Aranzeta Village, Malabon
Minimum Bid Price: 6,305,000

MUNTINLUPA CITY
LOT 8 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 319 sqm.
Lot 26, Block 3-E, Orange St.,
Ruby Park, Victoria Homes,
Tunasan
Minimum Bid Price: 638,000

PARANAGUE CITY
LOT 9 - CONDO-RESOL
Floor Area: 164.62
Unit 1703, Pacific Coast Condo.
Project, Coastal Road, Tambon
Minimum Bid Price: 3,000,000

LOT 10 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 749 sqm.
Lot 1, Abalone St., Jellville Subd.,
Brig. San Donato
Minimum Bid Price: 3,671,000

PASIG CITY
LOT 11 - CONDO-RESOL
Floor Area: 167.06 sqm.
Unit 804 Pearl Plaza Condo., Pearl
Drive, Ortigas Center
Minimum Bid Price: 4,600,000

QUEZON CITY
LOT 12 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 273 sqm.
Floor Area: 285 sqm.
No. 40 Caragay St., San Francisco
Del Monte
Minimum Bid Price: 2,590,000

LOT 13 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 400 sqm.
Floor Area: various
No. 28 Paces St., Carmel V Subd.,
Tandang Sora
Minimum Bid Price: 4,830,000

LOT 14 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 381 sqm.
Floor Area: 176 sqm.
No. 45 East Riverside St., San
Francisco Del Monte
Minimum Bid Price: 2,920,000

LOT 15 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 1,125 sqm.
Floor Area: various
#191 Kapisanan Ave., Quirino Dist.
Minimum Bid Price: 28,125,000

VALENZUELA CITY
LOT 16 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 1,728 sqm.
Floor Area: 100 sqm.
Lot 6-B-4-B-2, Colong Road I,
Brig. Colong
Minimum Bid Price: 2,550,000

LOT 17 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 9,037 sqm.
No. 3 San Andres Caraway
Minimum Bid Price: 20,250,000

RIZAL
LOT 18 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 400 sqm.
Lot 12, Bk. 21, Road Lot 9-A,
Village East Executive Homes,
Barrio San Isidro, Angono
Minimum Bid Price: 420,000

LOT ONLY
Cottonwood Heights, Bo. San
Isidro, Antipolo
LOT 19 - B-1/3 Teakwood
Lot Area: 287 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 861,000

LOT 20 - B-1/3 Teakwood St
Lot Area: 415 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,245,000

LOT 21 - B-1/3 Teakwood cor.
Oakwood St.
Lot Area: 274 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 959,000

LOT ONLY
Metro View Ridge Estates Subd.,
Antipolo
LOT 22 - Block 5 Lot 16
Lot Area: 360 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,664,000

LOT 23 - Block 6 Lot 12
Lot Area: 390 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,802,000

LOT 24 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 432 sqm.
Lot 14, Bk. 32, Forest Hills
Residential Estate and Golf &
Country Club, Phase I, Bo. San
Isidro, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price: 1,080,000

LOT 25 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 415 sqm.
Lot 15, Bk. 32, Forest Hills
Residential Estate and Golf &
Country Club, Phase I, Bo. San
Isidro, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price: 1,038,000

LOT 26 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 13,174 sqm.
Floor Area: 7,521.41 sqm.
Lot 1-A Sio Domingo, Carina, Rizal
Minimum Bid Price: 48,250,000

LOT 27 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 850 sqm.
Km. 23, Ortigas Ave. Ext., San
Isidro, Taytay
Minimum Bid Price: 8,500,000

BATANGAS
LOT 28 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 286 sqm.
Floor Area: 141.5 sqm.
Lot 7, Bk. 1, Lamar Vill.,
Bo. Sabang, Lupa
Minimum Bid Price: 967,000

LOT 29 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 748 sqm.
Lot 1, Bk. 3, Palm Ridge Drive cor.
Raffia Palm St., Palm Ridge
Ponte, Ph. 1, Bo. Balas, Talsay
Minimum Bid Price: 1,887,000

LOT 30 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 371 sqm.
Lot 21, Bk. 19, Palmridge Ponteio
Subd., Talsay
Minimum Bid Price: 1,039,000

LOT 31 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 19,195 sqm.
Lot 10252-B-3-A Lot 10258-A-3 &
Lot 10258-A-4, Int. J. P. Laurel
Provincial Road (Talsay-Tanawan
Road), Km. 71, Bo. Talaga,
Tandem
Minimum Bid Price: 7,200,000

ALABANG
LOT 32 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 24,525 sqm.
Floor Area: 121 sqm.
Bo. Tandang, Gungahon
Minimum Bid Price: 7,231,000

LOT 33 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 10,115 sqm.
Floor Area: various
No. 0736 Barangay Road, Bo.
Mulan, Bulacan
Minimum Bid Price: 4,300,000

LOT 34 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 1,997 sqm.
Lot 5216-B-1, Bo. Matandang Sil,
Pandi, Bulacan (interior lot)
Minimum Bid Price: 999,000

LOT 35 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 4,254 sqm.
Lot 2934-A, Lot 1083-D & Lot
1079-D-1, Mabini St., Bo. Sabang,
Baltag
Minimum Bid Price: 3,144,000

LOT 36 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 67,706 sqm.
Lot 1288 & Lot 840, Along Sta.
Maria-SJOM, Prov. Rd. Bo.
Dulang Bayan, SJOM, Bulacan
Minimum Bid Price: 22,970,000

LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 10,000 sqm.
Lot 2-C, Bo. Perez & Bahay Pare,
Maycayan
Minimum Bid Price: 27,000,000

LOT 38 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 12,870 sqm.
Lot 2802-B, Bo. Masasa, Pandi
Minimum Bid Price: 2,574,000

CAVITE
LOT 39 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 1,100 sqm.
Gov. Ferrer Ave., Brig. Tejero,
Rosario (beside SBC-Rosario
Branch)
Minimum Bid Price: 6,700,000

LOT ONLY
Southwood Villas, Silangan,
Bacoor
LOT 40 - Lot 117 Bk. 3
Lot Area: 176 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 440,000

LOT 41 - Lot 127 Bk. 3
Lot Area: 206 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 515,000

LOT ONLY
Metro Gate Subdivision, Trece
Martinez City
LOT 42 - Block 21 Lot 14
Lot Area: 126 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 292,000

LOT 43 - Block 21 Lot 17
Lot Area: 120 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 278,000

LOT 44 - Block 21 Lot 18
Lot Area: 120 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 278,000

LOT 45 - Block 21 Lot 20
Lot Area: 120 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 278,000

LOT 46 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 625 sqm.
Lot 13 & 15 Bk. 31, Brig.
Quintana, Trece Martinez City
Minimum Bid Price: 875,000

LOT ONLY
Eastland Golf and Residential
Estate, Amado Rd. Gen. Inas
LOT 47 - L-42 B-107 (interior lot)
Birmingham St.
Lot Area: 407 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 655,000

LAGUNA
LOT 48 - L-45 B-107 (interior lot),
Birmingham St.
Lot Area: 384 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 807,000

**LOT 49 - L-44 B-107 (interior lot),
Birmingham St.
Lot Area: 392 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 824,000**

**LOT 50 - L-34 B-107 (interior lot),
Birmingham St.
Lot Area: 470 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 987,000**

**LOT 51 - L-35 B-107 (interior lot),
Birmingham St.
Lot Area: 454 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 954,000**

**LOT 52 - L-20 B-59 (interior lot w/
share), Oxford St.
Lot Area: 654 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,770,000**

**LOT 53 - L-22 B-59 (interior lot w/
share), Woodstock St.
Lot Area: 550 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,410,000**

**LOT 54 - L-39 B-59 (interior lot w/
share), Oxford St.
Lot Area: 560 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,544,000**

LOT ONLY
Guarderama Street, Altamira
Subd., Puerto Anas, Brg. Sagsagan,
Ternate
LOT 55 - Lot 10, Bk. 6
Lot Area: 300 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 750,000

LOT 56 - Lot 11, Bk. 6
Lot Area: 300 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 750,000

LOT 57 - Lot 12, Bk. 6
Lot Area: 300 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 750,000

LOT 58 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 300 sqm.
Lot 6, Bk. 7, Lincoln St., PH I, The
Royale Tagaytay Estate, Alonzo
Minimum Bid Price: 1,386,000

LOT 59 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 324 sqm.
Floor Area: 297 sqm.
No. 8 Ortega St., San Vicente, San
Pedro
Minimum Bid Price: 1,190,000

LOT 60 - LOT & IMPROVMENT
Lot Area: 240 sqm.
Floor Area: 210 sqm.
#157 Country Dr. St., Country
Homes Subd., Barrio Soro-Soro,
Bifan
Minimum Bid Price: 1,180,000

LOT ONLY
Southlake Subd., Bo. Bukal,
Calamba
LOT 61 - Lot 8, Bk. 3
Lot Area: 240 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 480,000

LOT 62 - Lot 3, Bk. 5
Lot Area: 240 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 480,000

LOT 63 - Lot 1, Bk. 10
Lot Area: 418 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 820,000

LOT 64 - Lot 3, Bk. 10
Lot Area: 300 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 590,000

LOT 65 - Lot 5, Bk. 10
Lot Area: 240 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 472,000

BAGUIO CITY
LOT 66 - CONDO-RESOL
Floor Area: 115.87 sq. m.
Unit 21-D, Ridgegate Square II
Condominium, Leticia Pine corner
Calman Cupang, Brig. Camp 7
Minimum Bid Price: 3,200,000

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Panasonic Communications Imaging Corporation of the Philippines (PCIP), will cease its business operations effective March 31, 2005. This will be effected through amendment of its Articles of Incorporation shortening its corporate existence. The business, certain assets, liabilities and obligations to the creditors and customers of PCIP as of March 31, 2005 will be transferred/assumed by Panasonic Communications Corporation of the Philippines (PCP) with office address at Lot C3-8 Carmelray Industrial Park II, Special Economic Zone, Calamba, Laguna with telephone nos. 63-49-546-0109/110, 63-49-546-0112, 02-663-7920, fax no. 63-49-546-0111/0189.

The above decisions were in accordance with the duly adopted resolutions of the Board of Directors and Stockholders of PCIP and PCP in conformity with the business programs of Panasonic Holding (Netherlands) B.V. owner of both corporations, in order to strengthen its global market position and to meet the challenges and the emerging competition in the region.

PANASONIC COMMUNICATIONS IMAGING CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

(Sgd.) MAKOTO NAKAMURA
President and Chairman of the Board of Directors

(PDI)-Feb. 28, March 7 & 14, 2005

WANTED ACCOUNTING STAFF

- Female
 - Acct. graduate or any related course
 - Computer literate
- Call 330-5730 / 330-18-03

LUMAT/13041/2003 YWMO/LM
IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE
HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
MATRIMONIAL CAUSES
NO. 10049 OF 2003

BETWEEN
GANZON JUNIOR GALUAN Petitioner
and
TERRY JOHNA C Respondent

NOTICE

A DIVORCE PETITION HAS BEEN FILED AGAINST THE UNDERMENTIONED:-

The Respondent, TERRY JOHNA C, who may apply to the Family Court Registry at M2, Wanchai Law Courts, Wanchai Tower, No. 12 Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong for a copy of the divorce petition. It within one month he has not communicated with the Registry, the Court may hear the case in his absence.

Registrar

To be advertised as follows:-
Once in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, an English newspaper circulating in both Hong Kong and Philippines.
/m
(PDI - Feb 28, 2005)

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Client Testimonials

I picked-up loads of new concepts from the training. I saw what it takes to be a true leader and if I have the potential to be one. I also learned that the way I live my life affects not only me, but also the people whom I work and live with. A great course for established leaders and aspiring ones as well.

- Erwin Cabahab, Executive Development Analyst, PLDT

"The workshop is a timely approach today for all people involved in giving goal settings and performance evaluations in all fields of endeavor. The topics are comprehensive and contain practical tools for making a truly effective leader."

- Reynaldo Reyes, Director, Asia Partnership, Inc. Philippines

"Maxwell's concepts on leadership are simple yet profound.. It can uncover your blind spots as a leader. The training is a must for all leaders."

- Arid Driz, Project Manager, International Rectifier

"Leadership in its simplest form... This seminar is a must for anyone who both aspire to grow as a leader and desire to grow leaders."

- Bibi Aristen, Area Manager, Jollibee Foods Corporation

"In my 31 years of service in the corporate world, I have not come across any leadership program that captures in very simple yet powerfully clear principles of leading people. The program transcends old paradigms, and brings forth refreshing and inspiring concepts that not only are truly applicable in corporate relationships but also in other relationships which impact the ability of one to be a person of real influence."

- Bobby dela Cruz, Former VP, Citibank, N.A.



"When I experienced this training, I saw leadership principles I've taught all my life come to life."
- JOHN C. MAXWELL

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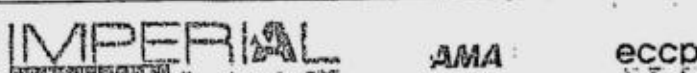
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The Office of the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund, Manila is seeking applications from competent candidates to fill the post of

Management Consultant for the UNFPA Programme Management Office for Mindanao

For details consult the UNFPA website at www.unfpa.org.ph/jobs

Deadline for submission of applications: 4 March 2005
(Only shortlisted applicants will be notified)



The Voice of Leadership:
How Leaders Inspire, Influence and Achieve Results
08-10 March 2005 The Peninsula Manila

"The difference between mere management and leadership is communication"
—Winston Churchill

It's a fact of organizational life: To lead well, you must communicate well. No communication, no leadership—no question about it. This fast-paced, results-oriented seminar is uniquely designed to strengthen your leadership communication skills. You'll learn practical techniques to shape your leadership messages, hone an authentic leadership voice and engage in powerful conversations that achieve results.

Who Should Attend

Experienced and recently promoted managers, supervisors and executives...as well as anyone who aspires to a leadership position or who is expected to provide leadership.

How You Will Benefit

- Become a more effective communicator—and leader
- Get your requests better and more quickly implemented
- Build greater buy-in, trust and loyalty
- Overcome resistance to change

What You Will Cover

- The Voices of Effective Leaders—Past and Present—Finding Your Voice
- Finding Your Leadership Voice
- Crafting Compelling Messages That Inspire Action and Produce Results
- Taking the Lead
- Setting the Direction You Want Others to Travel—Inspiring Others Into Action

Training Fees

- Php 29,400 + 10% VAT - AMA Members
- Php 30,950 + 10% VAT - Non-Members

For further information, please call Jasmin Ruiz at telephone numbers 8451324, or 7596680 or e-mail at jruiz@imperialconsulting.com.ph



NFA to evaluate retailers' records'

NATIONAL Food Authority (NFA) administrator Gregorio Y. Tan Jr. announced today that the food agency will start reviewing records of its accredited rice retailers to update its rice allocation system in preparation for this year's lean months. Tan said this action will ensure efficiency in the agency's rice distribution system. Records of the NFA's 22,664 accredited rice retailers nationwide will be reviewed and assessed to effectively maintain a network of reliable partners in making government rice available, accessible and affordable to low-income consumers, especially during the traditional lean period from July to September. Of the 22,466 rice retailers, a total of 10,116 operate rice outlets inside markets and 12,548 outside markets. Other NFA rice outlets include 1,533 Bigas ng Gloria sa Palengke, 80 Tindahan ni Pangulong Gloria in 15 hot spot areas and 189 Kalahi store outlets. "If there's a need to cancel the passbooks of some erring retailers, we will do so if it will result to a more efficient and organized rice distribution system," Tan explained. He also cited that utmost prudence will be exercised in the evaluation of the records so as not to jeopardize the delivery of the agency's services.



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OBITUARIES

*In Loving Memory
 on the Tenth Death Anniversary of*

Amparo P. Villamor

who peacefully joined her Creator on February 28, 1995

*Her family and loved ones request
 relatives and friends to join them in
 praying for the eternal repose of her soul.*



SEGUNDA DACANAY BALANGUE

of Aringay, La Union and Makati City
 (1924 - 2005)

who passed away February 26, 2005
 after a brave struggle with a lingering illness.

She will be missed by her husband, **Leon N. Balangue, Sr.**;
 children: **Arthur, Leon "Bot", Jr., Ma. Corazon "Beia", Edgardo "Boy",**
Manuel "Litho", Rosana; in-laws and grandchildren. The family requests
 your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Chapel O, Loyola Memorial Chapels,
 Guadalupe, Makati City.

Cremation will take place on Tuesday, March 1, 2005 at 12:00 noon
 after a necrological mass at 10:00 a.m. Interment follows at the
 Ossuary of the Our Lady of the Abandoned Church,
 Sta. Ana, Manila.

**"Do not let your hearts
 be troubled. Trust in God,
 trust also in Me. In My Father's
 house are many rooms...
 I am going there to prepare
 a place for you."**

John 14:1-2

Erratum

In the obituary ad of

AZUCENA ANCHETA AQUINO RILLORAZA

published in this paper February 27, 2005,
 her son-in-law and grandson Reynaldo Dyquiango
 and Reynaldo Dyquiango Jr. should be read as
Lorenzo Dyquiango and Lorenzo Dyquiango Jr.

RODEO "JUN" PAGDANGANAN, JR.

Born September 12, 1965

Entered eternal peace on the 26th
 of February, 2005 at the age of 39.

His bereaved wife May Ballesteros, daughter April, parents Rudy
 and Huida, siblings and in-laws Lou & Louie Tria, Jojo & Estelita
 Pagdanganan, Olay & Doy Yuson, Sonny & Doy Pagdanganan, his
 loving nieces and nephews, aunts and uncles and other relatives request
 the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Sta. Rita De Cascia Parish, Philam Life
 Homes, West Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on March 5, 2005, Saturday at 9:30 a.m.
 after Mass at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

CLASSIFIEDS



Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
 Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
(Public Bidding)

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH) wishes to invite
 bidders for **BLADE SERVERS and PERIPHERALS**.

Request for Proposal (RFP) can be obtained from February 20, 2005 to March
 6, 2005, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat - Bids and Awards
 Committee (OSBAC), Room 1804, 18th Floor, City State Centre #709 Shaw
 Blvd., Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pph
 5,000.00.

The PhilHealth had provided funds for this project. The approved budget for
 this contract is Pph10,000,000.00.

A pre-bid conference will be held on March 7, 2005 at 1:30 p.m. at the OSBAC
 (Rm. 1804).

The bidders shall prepare their duly accomplished eligibility requirements,
 technical and financial proposal in three separate sealed envelopes and drop
 in the respective bid boxes located at the above-mentioned address.

Submission of bids will be on March 29, 2005 on or before 12:00 noon at the
 OSBAC. Opening of bids will follow at 1:30 p.m. at the same venue. Any bidder
 who comes late will not be entertained. The official time clock shall be the wall
 clock located at Room 1804. Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be
 accepted.

The BAC-ITR shall determine if each prospective bidder is eligible to participate
 in the bidding by examining the completeness of each prospective bidder's
 eligibility requirements or statements against a checklist of requirements, using the
 non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria.

To guarantee the faithful performance by the winning bidder of his/her
 obligations under the contract prepared in accordance with the bidding
 documents, he/she shall post a Bid Security in any of the following forms and
 amount:

Forms of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid	Amount of Bid Security
Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)	Php 100,000.00
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1½%)	Php 150,000.00
Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2½%)	Php 250,000.00
Foreign Government Guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)	Php10,000,000.00

We look forward to your participation in this worthwhile endeavor.

PhilHealth reserves the right to waive any formality on the eligibility
 requirements of this project. Furthermore, PhilHealth reserves the right to reject
 any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract,
 and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered as a result of this
 invitation.

(Sgd) MELINDA C. MERCADO
 SVP, Health Insurance Operations Sector and
 Chairperson, BAC-ITR

(PDI - Feb. 22 & 28, 2005)



NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
 Region V, Legazpi City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
FOR THE SECURITY SERVICES FOR NFA REGION V

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY Region V, Legazpi City invites all interested private security
 agencies to register, apply for eligibility and to bid for the provisions of Security Services in the
 different installations of the NFA in the region. The service contract to be bid shall be divided
 into two (2) lots as follows:

LOT	AREA COVERED	NO. OF GUARDS	BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (Php)
1	Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur and Catanduanes	38	4,460,863.68
2	Albay, Sorsogon and Masbate	46	5,412,605.88

The source of the budget for the contract shall be the corporate operating budget of the agency.
 Registration/eligibility documents will be available for issuance at RBAC Secretariat, NFA
 Legazpi City upon payment of a non-refundable/non-transferable registration fee of P1,000.00.
 Only those who have been pre-qualified by the RBAC and who have paid an additional non-
 refundable bidding fee per lot of P3,000.00 shall be allowed to participate in the Pre-Bidding
 Conference and the Bidding Proper.

The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

ACTIVITIES	DATE	TIME	VENUE
Issuance of application forms for registration	February 18 to March 7, 2005	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	NFA Regional Office, Legazpi City
Deadline for submission of Application for registration with required documents	March 18, 2005	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	NFA Regional Office Legazpi City
Issuance of Certificate of Registration and Applica- tion for Eligibility to bid.	March 28-29, 2005	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	NFA Regional Office Legazpi City
Pre-Bidding Conference	April 1, 2005	10:00 AM	Conference Room, NFA R.O., Legazpi City
Submission and Opening of Bids	April 15, 2005	10:00 AM	Conference Room, NFA R.O. Legazpi City

A Special Power of Attorney is required before the issuance of the documents for authorized
 representative in behalf of the bidder.

Other inquiries may be addressed to the RBAC Secretariat, NFA Region V, Legazpi City with
 telephone numbers (052) 480-7015/ 480-7933.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY
 FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR AWARD
 TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONCERNED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE
 NFA OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) JOSE B. GUEVARA
 RBAC Chairman

(PDI - Feb. 21 & 28, 2005)



U.P. IN THE VISAYAS TACLOBAN COLLEGE
 BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
 Tacloban City
 Tel. Nos.: (053) 325-2270 / 325-5108 (telex)
 Website: www.upv.edu.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE VISAYAS TACLOBAN COLLEGE,
 through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and
 classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility
 and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract : Construction of the Library Building, UPV Tacloban College
 Location : Magsaysay Blvd., Tacloban City
 Brief Description : A three (3) storey building with a floor area of 2,115 sq.m.; a
 concrete structure supported by either isolated or combined
 footing foundation system covered by pre-painted roofing fixed
 on a steel roof framing.

Approved Budget : P16,078,254.36
 for the Contract (ABC) : One Hundred Eighty (180) calendar days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have
 completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key
 personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of
 the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/
 Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-
 qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance
 Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of
 Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing
 Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	Schedule (2005)	Venue
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility and Issuance of Eligibility Forms	March 01-14	Prof. Anna A. Arroyo c/o Office of the Dean UPV Tacloban College Tacloban City
2. Deadline: Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	March 21	
3. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	March 23	
4. Issuance of Bid Documents	March 28-April 8	
5. Site Inspection	April 13 (a.m.)	DM Conf. Rm., 2nd Floor Magsaysay Blvd., Tacloban City
6. Pre-Bid Conference	April 13 (p.m.)	
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	April 27	

Any changes in the above-stated schedule will be duly announced in a Bid Bulletin. The
 BAC will issue to prospective bidders. Eligibility Forms at the UPVTC Supply & Property
 Services Office, Tacloban City, upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payment of
 a non-refundable amount of Two Hundred Pesos (P200.00) to the College Cashier.
 Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said
 address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same
 address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible
 for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Nine Thousand Pesos
 (P9,000.00) to the College Cashier.

The University of the Philippines in the Visayas Tacloban College reserves the right to
 accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any formality in the bids received and to accept
 such bid which is most advantageous to the University and/or nullify the bidding without
 giving any reason. The University further assumes no obligation whatsoever to
 compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or losses that may be incurred in
 connection with the said bidding.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) ANNA A. ARROYO
 BAC Chair

(PDI - Feb. 28 & March 7, 2005)



Sohbi Kohgei (Phils.), Inc.

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- > willing to relocate in Lipa City, Batangas

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 SEZ, LIMA Technology Center
 Lipa City Batangas 4217
 or Fax to: (043) 981-3829



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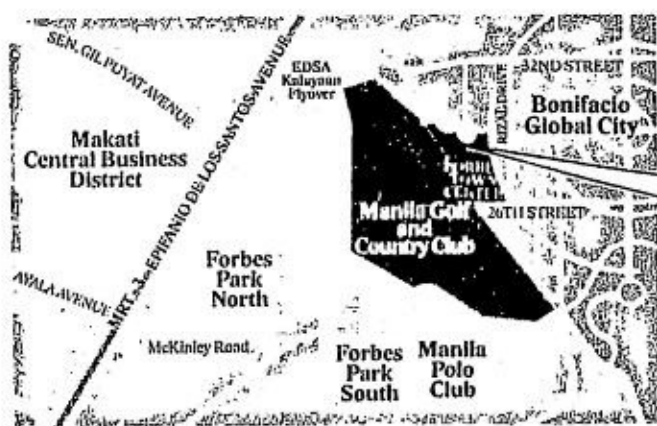
Architect's perspective of Forbes Town Road

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RP ON LIST OF TOP VIOLATORS

Media 'pirates' remain elusive as ever

By Abigail L. Ho

"DVD, VCD, Ma'am, Sir."

So goes the whispered calls of ambulant vendors in Quiapo, on the sidewalks of Ayala Avenue in Makati, on side streets near the port of Manila, and even in the provinces, lugging bags of their prized wares: pirated media.

Even some of the country's malls serve as venues for vendors of pirated media—be it video, music, software or games—to showcase their wares and earn more than a few bucks from the process.

While efforts to curb piracy have intensified over the past few years, with government working double time to conduct raids in areas tagged as piracy havens and with the private sector doing their fair share of monitoring activities to combat piracy, media "pirates" abound.

Proof of this is that the Philippines remains in the United States' Special 301 Priority Watch List of intellectual property rights (IPR) violators.

Investments in various fields that involve the use of optical media have also dropped, especially in recent years.

Software piracy

In a recent report commissioned by the Intellectual Property Coalition (IPC), University of the Philippines School of Economics professor Ramon Clarete pointed out that total new information technology investments declined in 2002 and 2003 when the piracy rate climbed to 68 percent and 72 percent, respectively.

The software piracy rate in the country was actually at a high 92 percent in 1996, but this started to fall steadily from 1997 at 83 percent to 2000 at 61 percent.

In 2001, however, the country's software piracy rate again went up to 63 percent. The next two years saw this rate climbing again.

New IT investments in the country peaked in 2001 at close to P11 billion, generating employment for 12,391 individuals. This amount drastically dropped the following year, however, to only P5.4 billion, declining even further in 2003 to just P1.4 billion.

"The study strongly indicates that as software piracy declines, IT investment and employment increases," the report said.

Music and taxes

In the music industry, piracy adversely affected not only the profits of those directly involved in the sector but also the earnings of the government via value-added tax remittances.

Since 1990, the local music industry posted almost steady growth, both in revenues and VAT remittances at a rate of 10 percent of total retail sales.

From total retail sales of P45.1 million in 1990, this figure ballooned to P2.1 billion in 2000.

By 2003, however, sales figures dropped to only P1.2 billion, nearing the 1995 level of P1.1 billion.

In terms of piracy rates, data from both the IPC and the International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA) showed that local music piracy started to boom in 2001.

IPC piracy estimates showed that the country suffered music piracy rates of 29 percent in 2001, 34 percent in 2002 and 40 percent in 2003.

IIPA data indicated even higher piracy rates at 33 percent in 2001, 40 percent in 2002 and 40 percent in 2003.

Similar to its findings on the relationship between software piracy and total new IT investments, the Clarete study pointed out the correlation between VAT remittances and music piracy rates.

"While total retail revenues and taxes collected continued to grow until 2001, by 2003, retail revenues and taxes collected were back to 1995 levels," the study stated.

Slow business in showbusiness

The music industry was not the only part of the local entertainment industry that took a huge blow from high piracy rates.

The motion picture industry, once considered a very lucrative sector, had to appropriately respond to the adverse effects of piracy on its business.

According to IIPA data, motion picture piracy was pegged at 65 percent each year from 1996 to 1999, rising to 70 percent in 2000, 80 percent in 2001 and 2002, and 89 percent in 2003.

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Given this 21st day of February 2005
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DEPARTMENT OF
TRADE & INDUSTRY
PHILIPPINES
Given this 21st day of February 2005
Makati Shangri-La Hotel, Makati City

Para sa inyo ito, mga ka-Greenwich ang awards para sa Outstanding Filipino Franchise of the Year 2004 (Fastfood) at Franchise Marketing Campaign of the Year 2004 (Food Category). Ipinagkaloob ang mga ito sa Greenwich sa Philippine Franchise Association, Department of Trade and Industry, Philippine Retailers Association, at Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Kaya No. 1 pizza chain na, most-awarded pal Salamat, mga ka-Greenwich! greenwich

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BUSINESSMonday

Mining in our backyards

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2005

MINING can, indeed, generate high revenues and employment for our country.

But I now mean a different type of mining that environmentalists and mineral mining proponents will not quarrel over. I refer to mining in our backyards—through recycling.

That is not just the personal belief of someone who is promoting recycling. It is based on the National Recycling Economic Information Study (see www.nrc-recycle.org) commissioned by the US Environmental Protection Agency, which explains recycling's significant contributions to the US economy.

According to the study, the US recycling industry employs 1.1 million people, generating an annual payroll of \$37 billion and grossing \$236 billion in annual sales.

These statistics, the study concluded, make the size of the recycling industry comparable to the size of the US auto and truck manufacturing industry, and significantly larger than the size of the mining industry.

The Philippines may have greater mineral mining potential than the United States. But the point is made that recycling can be a major contributor to an economy.

Recycling is also an industry that we can all participate in—right in our own backyards. It can generate significant employment opportunities and revenues for the government, as well as for local communities and industry, and at the same time protect our environment.

That last statement is based on a study of the economic impacts of waste disposal and diversion in California. The study concluded that when material is diverted

(i.e., out of landfills and recycled instead), total income and job creation nearly double.

Let us understand what constitutes recycling so we can help build the recycling industry.

Recycling starts from the segregation of waste at source—in our residential and office backyards. It includes collection of the segregated recyclable materials, their processing as inputs for the manufacture of new products with recycled contents, and proper disposal of the net waste, if there are any.

The recycling industry, therefore, includes those who segregate waste (such as the buildings in the Makati Central Business District that now do so), entrepreneurs who are involved in composting (such as Lacto Asia-Pacific which produces high-nutrient "Happy Soil" from biodegradable waste), as well as long-established sectors that use recycled materials in manufacturing.

In the US and in many other countries, the largest manufacturing industries that account for over half of the economic activity of the recycling industry consist of paper and paperboard mills, steel mills, recycled plastics converters, and iron and steel foundries.

In the Philippines, one of the large manufacturing industries involved in recycling is the cement industry.

Union Cement, for example, has a project on co-processing—the simultaneous substitution of waste materials as fuel or raw material and the production of clinker, the main cement ingredient.

The recycling industry also includes new companies involved in computer de-manufacturing

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Corazon
PB. Claudio



(such as HMR Envirocycle), organic composters (such as individual households that do composting), chemical and lumber manufacturers and recyclers (such as the Polystyrene Packaging Council of the Philippines, which now recycles foam polystyrene for the export market), and recycling technology developers (such as MAPECON, which developed a technology that converts grass, and other biodegradable cellulosic waste, into green charcoal).

The industry also includes local government units that have integrated recycling in their ecological solid waste management programs (such as the city governments of San Fernando, La Union and Parañaque), community-based organizations involved in producing new products from recyclables (such as the Kilus Foundation of Pasig City, which makes beautiful bags, jewelry and other export-quality products from doypacks and old magazines), nongovernmental organizations that provide training on recycling (such as the Mother Earth Foundation and the Zero Waste Recycling Movement of the Philippines) or operate recycling programs (such as the Philippine Business for the Environment, which runs the Industrial Waste Exchange Program).

Recognizing the economic contributions of recycling, the Asia-Pacific Environmental Innovation Strategy (APEIS) project,

which involves more than 30 major research and environmental organizations in the region, has included a recycling project in one of its three major components, the Research for Innovative Strategic Policy Options (RISPO).

The RISPO Recycling team is composed of research scientists and scholars from Japan, Thailand and the Philippines. We, at the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), represent the Philippines in the team.

The RISPO Recycling Team's mandate is to develop, with sectoral consultations, strategic policy options for the improvement of the inter-boundary (or export-import) market for recyclables.

This week, we shall finalize the SPOs at the annual meeting of the RISPO Teams at Japan's Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), the lead organization for the APEIS project.

Our team has developed three main strategies for improving the inter-boundary market for recyclables: promotion of efficient market for recyclables (demand side), improvement of the supply capacity for recyclables (supply side), and establishment of systems and networks for promoting regional cooperation on recycling.

On the demand side, two SPOs are on the increased use of recyclables over virgin materials, e.g., through "green" procurement (or purchase of products made with recycled materials, especially by the government) and greening of supply chain to promote strong demand for recyclables, e.g., partnership of big companies with their suppliers in designing products with high recyclable content.

On the supply side, we have developed SPOs on increased private sector involvement in waste management and improvement of the role of the informal sector in it, e.g., through community-based enterprises; strengthening of policies and legal frameworks on the 4Rs (reduce, recover, reuse, recycle); and application of the Extended Producer Responsibility principle and other similar ones on recyclables and durable goods, e.g., a deposit-refund system for cellular phones.

On the establishment of systems and networks for promoting regional cooperation on recycling, we are recommending SPOs on the standardization and harmonization of recycling systems, e.g., adopting a common trade statistical system for recyclables in the Asia-Pacific region; setting up of regional networks of recycling zones; and establishment of a regional information system and supportive information, education and communication (IEC) programs on recycling.

On the latter, we are proposing the creation of an Internet-based Asia-Pacific Recycling Information System (APRIS), which shall provide news and useful data on recycling and provide links to similar systems elsewhere.

On the SPO to strengthen policies and legal frameworks on the 4Rs, our recommendations include introducing waste management system improvements (e.g., improving contracting procedures for waste collection), regulatory improvements (e.g., application of public-private partnership in enforcing regulations), and cost-effective technologies and systems on the 4Rs.

After we have finalized the

SPOs, we hope that policy makers in the Asia-Pacific region will adopt them for promoting environmentally sound recycling.

We emphasize the phrase "environmentally sound" since recycling may also be bad for the environment, if it is not done properly.

For example, the recycling of drums that previously contained toxic chemicals into containers of food products without proper treatment is certainly bad for the environment, as well as for public health.

But policy makers alone cannot turn recycling into a major industry. For recycling to work well and for it to become a major industry, everyone has to participate in it.

Government agencies and business companies could lead the way by segregating waste in their backyards and giving priority to products with significant recycled contents in their procurement programs.

Ordinary citizens could segregate waste and support recycling by buying and using products made from recycled materials.

Recycling is another type of mining that is as promising, if not more, than mining minerals. Through it, we can also find gold—even just in our backyards.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. Dr. Claudio, Trustee of the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication, Co-Chairman of the Environment Committee with Ed Chua of Shell. She is the project director of the MAP-IGES Recycling Project. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

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AIM names new governors

THE ASIAN Institute of Management (AIM) has named two new members of its international Board of Governors from Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China.

Victor Chu is the founder and chair of the First Eastern Investment Group (Hong Kong), a regional investment firm involved in the management of direct investments in China and the Asian, and of several regional companies.

Chu is a council member of the World Economic Forum in Geneva, chair of the



CHU

Paris-based ICC Commission on Financial Services and Insurance, and a director and council member of the HK Stock Exchange.

Long Yongtu is the secretary general of the Boao Forum for Asia, a non-profit, nongovernment international organization that promotes economic exchanges and cooperation within the region and other parts of the world.

He is the Chief Negotiator for China's resumption of GATT contracting party status and its accession to the WTO.

He led the first Chinese delegation to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris in 1995 and established the relationship of dialogue partner with the organization.

"We are very honored to welcome Messrs. Chu and Yongtu to our Board of Governors," said AIM president Roberto de Ocampo. "Their addition further strengthens our prestigious Board and bolsters AIM's position as a management school of world-class standard."

The AIM Board of Governors will be holding its annual meeting on March 4, 2005 and will discuss the Institute's growing globalization.

AIM has been accredited by the two major accreditation agencies for business schools The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) of North America, and the European Foundation for Management Development, which administers the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS).

These accreditations signal that AIM is at par with American and European business schools.



YONGTU

From ordinary to extraordinary

WHEN you hear the word ordinary—in reference to a person, a restaurant, an athlete, an actor, or anything else—what comes to mind?

If you're anything like me, you automatically think of words such as average, plain, common, and everyday. You're probably not thinking in specifics—ordinary people and places simply aren't that memorable.

Now switch mental gears and ponder what you think of when you hear the word extraordinary.

Are words such as amazing, outstanding, brilliant, and exceptional coming to mind? I expect so.

You might even be thinking of a particular individual who fits this description—an incredible football player, a captivating public speaker, a Nobel Prize-winning poet, a gifted pianist, or cellist.

This little exercise might seem to indicate that there is a huge gap between being ordinary and being extraordinary.

It might lead you to believe that if you're an ordinary person with an ordinary job, you have no hope of ever achieving success or doing something that really makes a difference.

This is a commonly held belief. But I'm here to tell you, it's not valid.

Think of it in terms of professional baseball.

If a player on your favorite team had a lifetime batting average of .340, you would consider him to be an extraordinary hitter—definite Hall of Fame material.

At the same time, if another player on the same team consistently averaged around .240, you would probably think he was just okay—if you even knew who he was at all.

There would be worlds of difference between these two players when it came to fan recognition, playing time, and, of course, salary. But think about it. What do their batting averages really say about these players? For every 10 visits to the batter's box, the first player gets a hit 3.4 times, compared with 2.4 times for the second player.

Percentage-wise, that's not a great difference. And that's my point.

In baseball, as in other areas of life, there's not much difference between ordinary and extraordinary. But that little bit makes a huge difference in four key areas.

Extraordinary individuals:

1. Garner more respect.
2. Add more value to other people.
3. Make much more money.
4. Are perceived differently by the people around them.

Look closely at the two words we've been discussing: ordinary and extraordinary. What's the difference between the two? Five little letters that make up the word extra.

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell



That's it. Just put "extra" in front of ordinary and you get extraordinary.

So what does it take to move from ordinary to extraordinary? Think about it in terms of the topics we've covered in recent issues of this column.

If you want to go from ordinary to extraordinary—in your role as a leader or in any other area of life—give a little extra effort. Spend a little extra time. Seek a little extra help. Possess a little extra realism. Make a little extra change. That's all it takes—a little extra.

Let me add two more areas where a little extra will help you make the leap to the next level.

1. A little extra attitude.

You see, motivation determines what you do, ability determines what you're capable of doing, and attitude determines how well you do it. When I see a person operating with excellence, I know it's because he or she has a good attitude.

In writing about the Olympics, the late sports columnist Jim Murray commented that, in the history of the Games, the difference between gold medalists and silver medalists in all the timed events was less than one-tenth of a second.

"That's not ability," he said. "That's attitude."

2. A little extra planning.

Robert Eliot, a cardiology professor at the University of Nebraska, has some great advice about this he said, "It's important to run not on the fast track, but on your track," "Pretend you have only six months to live, and make three lists: the things you have to do, want to do, and neither have to do nor want to do. Then, for the rest of your life, forget everything on the third list."

What does it take to come up with such lists? A little extra planning.

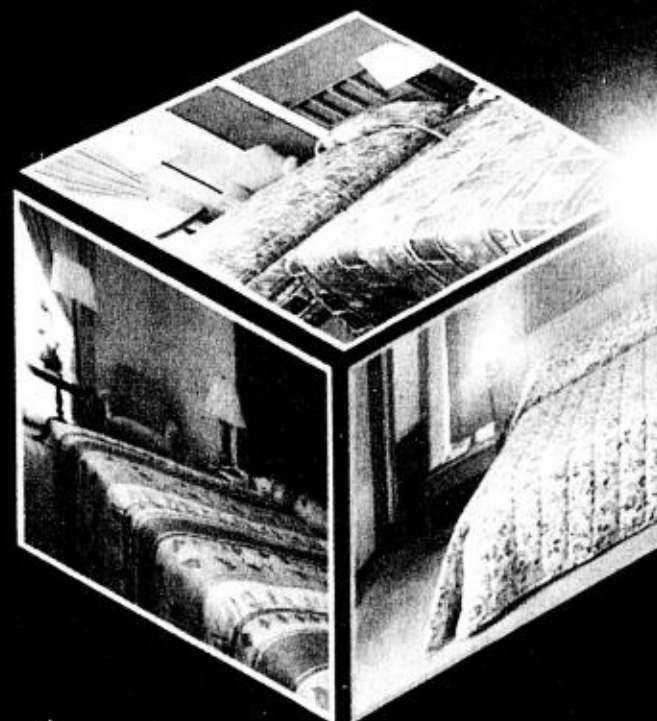
You might think of yourself as pretty ordinary right now, but what would happen if you moved your life up just one notch? What would happen if you added a little extra in any of these areas?

Remember—the distance between ordinary and extraordinary is not that great, but the resulting difference in your life when you make that leap could be far greater than you could even imagine.

Send your comments or questions to Dr. Maxwell c/o slvguru@pldtDSL.net

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work & relax

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even perfect strangers,

who begin to interest us at first sight,

somehow suddenly, all at once, before a

word has been spoken."

Fyodor Dostoevsky

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Don't buy that fake Rolex! It could finance terror

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NEW YORK—Think twice before you buy that fake Rolex watch or knock-off designer handbag. The money you pay could be end up funding terrorists.

It's not something most shoppers think about when tempted by the cheap and increasingly abundant wares of street vendors.

But law enforcers say the threat is real and probably growing.

There is evidence that counterfeiters operating in New York City have sent money to Hamas and Hezbollah, groups designated as terrorist organizations by the United States, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said at a conference on counterfeiting.

So far, said Kelly, there had been no clear link between the selling of counterfeit goods and al-Qaida, the group blamed for the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001.

But he said the low cost of entry into the counterfeit business, low risk of penalties and the potentially big payoff made the making and selling of fake goods an ideal criminal enterprise, one that would appeal to terrorists in the same way it attracts organized crime.

According to estimates by the International Chamber of Commerce, counterfeit goods accounted for 6 percent of world trade, valued at about \$456 billion.

Kelly said that in New York, counterfeiting deprives the city of nearly \$1 billion in tax revenues every year. The costs to security are more difficult to quantify.

Juan Zarate, the US Treasury Department's top terror funding cop, said terror groups have become more sophisticated in funding their activities as the United States and other countries crack down on money laundering through banks and other financial institutions.

Counterfeiting is one of the methods used by terrorists to raise cash, he said.

Zarate said the Treasury had "seen examples where traded goods have been used to support terrorist groups." But he added that it was often quite difficult to draw clear lines between the counterfeit trade and terrorists.

The link between terrorism and counterfeiting has not escaped the attention of luxury goods makers, which have long been fighting a battle to protect their lucrative trademarks.

It's worth millions in lost revenues to the com-



JIM Caldwell, president of Warner Home Video, said Warner will take its battle against rampant piracy to the front lines and sell cut-rate DVDs in China in a bid to compete on the counterfeiters' home turf.

panies, but they say it's not just about money.

Glossy magazine Harper's Bazaar has been trying to make the case to its fashion-conscious readers that the bargain bags they buy on the street might be made by child labor or to line the pockets of drug dealers or terrorists.

"While purchasing just one fake accessory on a street corner might seem like an amusement, this is a far more serious crime than most of the public understands," said Valerie Salembier, publisher of Harper's Bazaar, the sponsor of the counterfeiting conference.

Frederick Mostert, chair of the Intellectual Property Group of the Walpole Committee, a trade association of British luxury goods makers, said it was impossible to make goods counterfeit-proof. "Anything can be faked," he said.

Consumer education was the key. But it was hard to convince buyers to avoid cheap fakes when the fakes themselves often were considered chic.

People must understand "it's not a \$10 product. It's cash, it's money laundering, it's organized crime, it's child labor, it's linked to terrorism and to drugs," said Bertrand Stalla-Bourdillon, general manager at Louis Vuitton. Reuters

Media . . .

From page B2-1

Evidence is that home video viewing actually grew over the years, even as the number of movies produced per year dropped drastically.

In 1997, when 211 local movies were produced, 344,884 units of VHS players were sold. By 2003, when the number of films produced dropped to only 80, the number of video viewing appliances (VHS, VCD, DVD players) sold was still a pretty high 215,350 units.

"The growth in home viewing of motion pictures cannot explain the phenomenal decrease in the production of local movies, unless viewing of pirated media is taken into account," the study said.

"It is, therefore, evident that videocassette and optical disc piracy, given the trend towards home viewing, severely affects the entire film industry. In particular, it is detrimental to theater revenues, the video manufacturing and distribution business and actual movie production," it added.

Huge losses

Data from the Optical Media Board (OMB) show that the local movie, video and music industries have so far lost P9.8 billion in 2004 as pirated copies of just-released movies and albums continue to proliferate, not just in the streets of Manila, but in the provinces as well.

The theater industry, which was projected to earn P7 billion last year, registered revenues of only P3 billion as movie buffs preferred to go for pirated VCD and DVD copies of movies even before they hit the theaters.

Cinema Exhibitors Group secretary general Eduardo Sazon had earlier said that piracy did not only result in revenue losses for the theater industry, but also in a massive downsizing of the industry.

From 1,200 theaters in 1997, he said the number had fallen to only 870 as admissions drastically declined.

The industry had to implement huge hikes in admission prices just to stay afloat, which then further discouraged movie buffs from going to the theaters to watch the latest flicks.

The video distribution industry likewise suffered losses amounting to P4.9 billion due to piracy.

From a 2004 projection of P6.3 billion, earnings so far had been pegged at only P1.4 billion.

The music industry also continued to suffer a blow from piracy, with revenues coming up to only P1.3 billion from a projected P3.3 billion this year.

Based on actual seizures by the OMB in the July-September 2004 period, the hardest hit sector is the software industry with 137,246 discs costing an average of P1,000 each confiscated.

Although accounting for only 20 percent of the OMB's total seized goods in that period,

the high cost of legitimate software and the extremely low P50 price tag that pirates sold the rip-offs for translated to a whopping P137.2-million damage to the industry.

The music industry is the next hardest hit, with 283,194 discs confiscated at an average legitimate market price of P355 each.

This translated to P100.5 million in losses for music industry stakeholders.

The movie industry is next in line, accounting for 49 percent of total goods confiscated.

With the OMB seizing 364,715 discs in its first quarter of operation and with legitimate VCDs and DVDs having an average price of P224 apiece, the total damage to the industry is placed at more than P81.7 million.

The relatively new local gaming industry has also been invaded by pirates, accounting for 4 percent of OMB's seizures from July to September last year.

The 28,144 confiscated discs priced at an average P1,500 each translated to P42.2 million in losses for the gaming industry.

The remedy

The Clarette study showed that monitoring and enforcement both played big parts in curbing piracy in the software, music and movie industries.

In the software industry, it was found that monitoring proved to be a better piracy-curbing tool as the more firms monitored for IPR violations, the lower the piracy rate got.

"The number of monitored firms and level of new (Board of Investments) investments in software development and IT services appears to move in a similar direction, though with a one-year lag," the report said.

"This suggests that market perceptions and speculation are significant issues that affect the demand for IT services."

In the music and motion picture industries, on the other hand, enforcement seemed to be the way to go. As more IPR violators are apprehended, piracy rate declines.

IPC secretary general Teodoro Kalaw IV said enforcement actions should continue.

Recently installed Intellectual Property Office director general Adrian Cristobal Jr. offered another solution to the piracy problem: instilling in Filipinos an appreciation and acceptance of intellectual property.

"We need to generate among our people pride in the creation of our artists. We should elevate the awareness of IPR as well as the pride in our heritage and local talents. We need to go beyond just copyrights," he said.

He admitted that the IPO could not get rid of piracy overnight as it had to be a concerted effort, not only among industry stakeholders, but also among patrons of pirated media.

So maybe the next time you hear those ambient vendors offering you their latest pirated VCD or DVD titles, think twice about buying. Or else, the death of the local music and movie industries and the flight of huge IT capital suffer.

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COUPLE in business Maldwyn and Ruth de Pano of Design Plus (second and third from left) with Zenny S. Macaspac of UP ISSI (extreme left) and Paterno V. Viloria and Nella Gonzalez of SERDEF.

Celebrating 'co-preneurs'

By Myrna Rodriguez-Co
UP ISSI

COUPLES need not limit their successful partnership to the home and family, as some husband-and-wife teams demonstrate.

Joey and Mayette Santiago's love story began with their common love for fish balls. They now produce and franchise Migos Fritters, now touted as the streetfood for the finicky and the upscale.

Cesar and Beth Toscano were once political activists. Now they are revolutionaries for the food industry, through Toscano Enterprises, makers and exporters of the Sea Kid brand of snack foods.

Maldwyn and Ruth de Pano used to send memos to each other when they had differences they couldn't resolve. Now, they are glowing, growing and leapfrogging from printing to publishing, recording and allied industries.

When a balikbayan visited home in 1993, he didn't expect to find love and entrepreneurship in his native country. But Jofel Babaran did and never looked back. Now, he owns and manages Arte Caña, a progressive furniture company, with wife Frances.

She sold her most beloved pieces of jewelry for a shot at entrepreneurship. He helped her professionalize the business. They are Lorna and Ronnie Kalaw of Lokal Industries Inc. whose soft toy products earn raves abroad.

Bing Cuchapin set up CB Creativity to help create jobs for the constituents of her husband, then Paniqui town mayor Cesar Cuchapin. Now both are committed to the business, for better or for worse.

Rufino and Ana Manrique used to walk the road less traveled. Now they are back to the social mainstream. They now co-own Moonbake, Moondish and Star Glow. Moondish is famous for its canned laing.

Daisy Veridiano's life changed when she found her Tatay's old kropek recipe in a tattered notebook. Her Tatay's legacy became Daisy Food Products, which she now runs with husband Teddy, who professionalized the business.



COUPLE in business Ronnie and Lorna Kalaw (3rd and 4th from left) of Lokal Industries with Francisco R. Floro of SERDEF, Ditas Esguerra of ISSI and Yolanda dela Cruz of SERDEF.

Both used to be overseas contract workers in Saudi Arabia—he as an engineer, she as a nurse, leaving a baby behind and feeling guilty about it. Little did they know their fortune awaits them in their backyard. Jimmy and Girlie Itao's Industrial Controls Corp. now serves industrial automation needs of manufacturing enterprises, big and small.

Wilson and Melanie Ng of Cebu were to the manor born. All they had to do was to continue the businesses their respective parents began. But, no thank you, they wanted their own.

Now they manage the biggest IT company in Visayas-Mindanao, Ng Khai Development Corp.

These are just some of the conjugal partnerships featured in the book entitled, *Dreamers Doers Risktakers—Couples in Business*.

The book includes 26 case stories of successful "copreneurs," couples who have mastered the tricky balancing act between the demands of family/marriage and business enterprise.

The stories are not just about hard work, risk-taking and commitment to business goals but also about making compromises, coping with differences in management styles, breaking power stalemates, breaching gender stereotypes.

The book was launched recently by the Small Enterprises Research and Development Foundation and the University of the Philippines Institute for Small-Scale Industries.



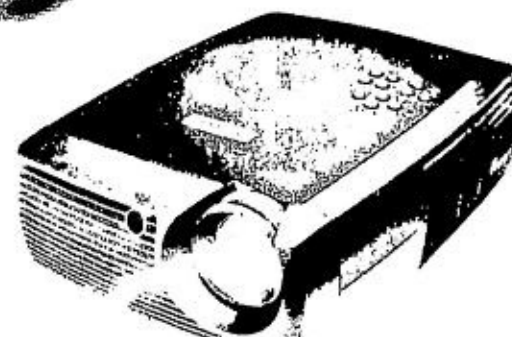
WILSON Ng of Ng Khai Development Corp., Cebu, delivers response in behalf of couples in business.

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People, Events & Products

Cemex Philippines: Helping build the future

VICTIMS of the recent calamities in Luzon will soon get a reprieve with the launching Feb. 4 of Kalinga-Luzon, a government-initiated project aimed at rehabilitating and reconstructing the typhoon-ravaged areas.

Cemex Philippines has committed to be a major partner of the Kalinga-Luzon project through the supply of cement at substantial discounts. The savings expected to be generated by Kalinga-Luzon from its partnership with Cemex Philippines is estimated to reach more than P12 million, which will go into the construction of two Kalinga-Luzon villages.

The initial target of Kalinga-Luzon is to build 2,500 houses by June 2005, and 40,000 houses by the end of 2006.

No less than President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo graced the launching of the project initiated by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC). Among those also present at the launching were former President Corason Aquino, Sen. Richard Gordon, Secretary Corason Juliano-Soliman of DSWD, and Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, NDCC Chair.

Cebu infrastructure project support

Cemex Philippines supported one of the major infrastructure development projects of the provincial government of Cebu through the donation of cement for the rehabilitation of the bridges in the southwestern part of Cebu.

The agreement was seated in a simple memorandum of agreement (MOA) signing ceremony held at the session hall of the town of Alegria, southwest of Cebu.

Speaking in a mix of English and Cebuano, Cebu Governor Gwendolyn Garcia said, "The Cebuanos are known for working together to achieve greater heights, and this is why even



those who are not from Cebu, like Cemex Philippines, are on board to support us."

Cemex Philippines president and CEO Jaime Ruiz de Haro, on the other hand, said, "We are glad to be a part of this collaborative project, and we are fully aware this will yield benefits, in terms of accessibility and in inviting gainful activities in these towns."

Cemex Philippines, through this collaborative effort with the provincial government, demonstrates continuing commitment to be an active player in responding to the needs of the province.

The audience, happy with Cemex Philippines' cement donation, were thrilled all the more when De Haro ended his message with a "daghang salamat" ("thank you" in Cebuano).

Present to witness the MOA signing were Rep. Simeon Kintanar, Vice Governor Greg Mar-

tinez, mayors and the DPWH Regional and District engineers.

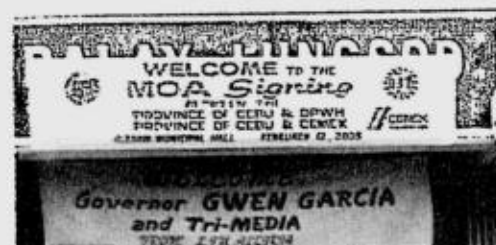
Tying up with SHDA

Building on the partnership begun in 2004, Cemex Philippines and the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association (SHDA) Negros chapter again joined forces in 2005 to renew a cement supply agreement.

Held at the Bacolod Inn Feb. 12, the two enterprises affixed their signatures to a memorandum of agreement that will be effective over a six-month duration.

Within this prescribed period, Cemex Philippines has committed to supply cement at a special price to SHDA member housing developers for their social housing projects.

Developers are assured of fixed cement prices during the stated period. In addition, the company



will also provide technical support and insight on how to make efficient and effective use of the cement supply. Buffered from the influence of price fluctuations, developers will better be able to build decent and affordable homes, which would eventually positively impact the underprivileged of Bacolod. The seven housing developers who will initially benefit from the MOA are Firm Builders Realty Development Corp, Fernando Gonzaga Inc, Wellmix Aggregates, Carmela Valley Corp, Regent Pearl Development Corp, Northland Realty and Home Invest Realty Ventures Inc.

This collaboration came about in 2004 as Cemex Philippines and SHDA combined their efforts in answer to the President's call to ease the mass housing shortage.

With the forging of this partnership, Cemex Philippines remains committed to its mandate in building the future of the nation by touching one community at a time. By supplying the Filipino's basic needs for affordable housing, Cemex Philippines assists underprivileged families in taking the first step towards a brighter future.

ProductFILES

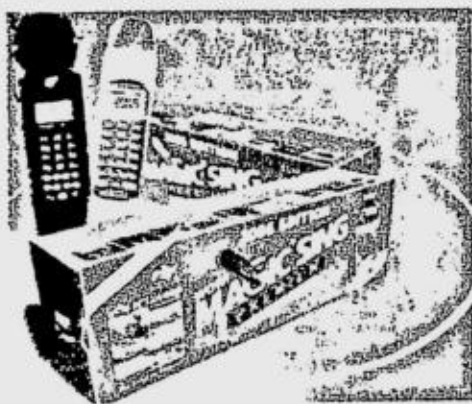
Videoke anytime, anywhere

WOW! MAGIC Sing Premium, the number one-selling videoke microphone, has once again taken the lead in providing the demands of its consumers by adding new features to fully satisfy the Filipinos' passion in singing with the launch of its 2005 edition.

The 2005 edition features include real time scoring, adjustable lyric display, song select repeat and first lyric line display-on browse for added enjoyment and convenience. With its latest innovation, you can now have the option to choose between the amateur, professional or star singer scoring level that fits your singing ability. Plus, you can also change the voice style from male to female version, and vice versa.

As an added bonus, you get the following freebies when you buy Wow! Magic Sing Premium 2005 edition, such as a free neck-phone and mic stand, full color guide to Wow Philippines tourist destinations, Biyahe Tayo bonus song built-in, and Biyahe Tayo DVD when you buy a duet mic or additional song chips.

Wow! Magic Sing Premium is the only



videoke microphone in the market today that promotes tourism/nationalism by highlighting the country's tourist destinations and world-class establishments with its 55 built-in Wow Philippines scenic back-grounds. Wow! Magic Sing Premium 2005 edition is exclusively distributed by In-A-Jiffy Enterprises. For more information, call 405-0178, 722-5527 or log on to www.magicmic.com.

'HIDden' benefits

HALOGEN light bulbs for your car, motorcycle or truck are often expensive. Halogen bulbs burn around 500 degrees Fahrenheit, which is extremely hot. This makes halogen light bulbs unusable for certain applications and ideal for others.

If halogen bulbs aren't compatible with your car, try High Intensity Discharge (HID)

Xenon bulbs, as they are growing in popularity due to its high quality.

Xenon bulbs are similar in performance to halogen bulbs, with slightly different criteria. Some of the benefits of Xenon bulbs include a longer life span than halogen light bulbs, they burn cooler, have no harmful UV rays, can be handled with bare hands and shine twice as bright as halogen bulbs. Many older cars come equipped with frosted tungsten sealed beam headlights and these can, at some expense, be converted to xenon to improve driving at night. Stock bulb headlights can be replaced directly with Xenon HID replacement bulbs. These bulbs work at high-performance ratios, which make xenon an OEM equipment of high-end European and Japanese luxury cars. Shown is a Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VII of the Emperor Motorsports-LanEvo Club equipped with an HID kit. HID kits are also available for cars, SUVs, AUVs and sport bikes.

Xenon HID systems are locally distributed by Hummer Philippines Inc. For inquiries, call 713-1998 or 0917-8307832. Visit the Xenon showroom at 318 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City, or log on to www.xenon-bulbs.com.



Belmonte supports best cops search

QUEZON City Mayor Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte Jr has signified his support to the 2005 Metrobank Foundation search for the Country's Outstanding Policemen in Service (COPS) at a gathering of the Philippine National Police Station Commanders of his city held recently at the Quezon City Hall. Representatives from the Metrobank Foundation and Rotary Club of New Manila East (RCNME) also took the opportunity to encourage the members of the PNP to join this year's Search. The COPS search will award outstanding members of the PNP who have been in active duty for at least seven years. The awardees will each receive a trophy and a cash prize of P150,000. Belmonte pledged additional cash incentives to any Quezon City commissioned or non-commissioned police officer who will win in this year's search. Deadline of nominations for the search for COPS is on Feb. 28. For details, call the Metrobank Foundation at 857-5525, 750-0837 or the RCNME at 890-8661.

Defensor, Santos to open international furniture show today

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Michael Defensor and Trade Secretary Juan Santos will lead the global furniture industry in opening the Philippine International Furniture Show (PIFS) 2005 at the World Trade Center and Philippine Trade Training Center at 9 a.m. today.

Defensor and Santos will deliver their speeches shortly after the opening remarks by PIFS 2005 chair Randolph Viray, introduction of guests by Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines (CFIP) president Nicholas de Lange, and singing of the national anthem by String Minstrels.

Participated in by members of the CFIP, the diplomatic corps, government and business community, the ceremonies will unveil "Diseno Manila" and officially open the international exhibit featuring four theme settings at the WTC lobby, design and product development program exhibition at the PTTC lobby, and theme pavilion at the PTTC main hall.

The exhibits will showcase the country's finest furniture products, furnishings and accessories catering to the upper segment of the multibillion-dollar world market.

Some 4,000 local and international trade buyers are expected to do business during the four-day show, which

runs up to Thursday, March 3.

A leisure activity dubbed "PIFS After 5" consisting of cocktails and entertainment is scheduled at 5 to 7 tonight for buyers and guests.

Tomorrow afternoon, a presentation on the "Outlook and Merchandising Trends for the Middle East" will be conducted by Gulf Interiors editor-in-chief Maggie Moore, followed by "Design and Merchandising Trends for Europe" by ICIB import manager Vanessa Barcaccia and owner Italico Barcaccia, and capped by a "Buyers' Night" featuring cocktails and entertainment and the awarding ceremony for the prestigious Lihang Pilipino Awards.

On Wednesday, a presentation on "Design and Product Development" will be conducted by Product Development and Design Center of the Philippines (PDDCP) designers Janet Guinto and Art Delgado, followed by a culminating seminar for the Design and Product Development Program of the CFIP, PDDCP, and the Private Enterprise Accelerating Resource Linkage II (PEARL2).

CFIP is the proponent of the Design and Product Development Program, with the PDDCP and Pearl2 as partner agencies.

Begun October 2004, the program consisted of a two-day orientation seminar, a three-day materials devel-

opment workshop, a two-day design trends and color forecast seminar, and a five-phase product development consultancy.

The project was conducted in Manila, Pampanga and Iloilo, with 16 of the 35 participating companies being able to produce furniture prototypes based on the trends and the new material applications developed under the program.

Through the program's culminating seminar at the PIFS 2005, the organizers will be able to present the outputs to all interested manufacturers, provide inputs on the importance of design, product development and feedback on prototypes developed, and give awards to participants.

On the last day of the show on Thursday, a presentation on how communication technology can facilitate the furniture business will be conducted by international sales manager Paul Chong of Net2Phone Asia Pacific, managing partner Jonathan Santiago of RADJTech, and president Amelia Cabansay of Virtual Route Philippines.

Likewise, abrasives and finishing technologies for furniture and wood work will be discussed by 3M Philippines senior sales representative Gerald Trinidad and Syntema Manila technical manager Don Pascual.



NEW BRAND OF FENOFIBRATE LAUNCHED

Patriot Pharmaceuticals Inc recently launched a new brand of fenofibrate, Fibraten 200M. The drug, which is indicated for dyslipidemia, has been shown in clinical studies to be effective in lowering triglycerides and a form of cholesterol called very-low-density lipoprotein (VLDL). It can also increase the level of good cholesterol in the body. Clinical studies such as the Diabetes Atherosclerosis Intervention Study (Dais) published in The Lancet has already shown that patients who took fenofibrate had a 40-percent decline in the progression of atherosclerosis. Pre-

sent during the launching were (from left) Wilfredo Paulo, senior VP for corporate affairs, Patriot Pharmaceuticals Inc; Dr. Mary Ann Lim-Abraham, president of the Philippine Lipid Society; Dr. Abdias Aquino, president of the Philippine Society of the Philippines; Dr. Ricardo Fernando, founding president of the Institute for the Studies of Diabetes Foundation; Dr. Tommy Ty-Willing, vice-president of Philippine Diabetes Association; Vangila de Jesus, product manager of Fibraten and Chito Aquino, assistant VP for corporate affairs, Patriot Pharmaceuticals Inc.

'Tempura Temptations' at Edsa Shang's Nishiki

FEAST on authentic tempura at Edsa Shangri-La's Nishiki until Feb. 28. Tempura owes its origins to the Portuguese missionaries visiting Japan in the 16th century. Gradually adapting to local needs and tastes, it later became a national dish, representing Japan's culinary essentials—the use of absolutely fresh ingredients, chef's expert skills and artistic presentation. Tempura's popularity has made

Japanese cooking highly regarded worldwide. Find out why with its Nishiki's authentic prawn, sea eel, sea urchin, oyster, salmon, chicken with cod roe, lobster with egg yolk, beef with seaweed, and scallop with yam tempura. Nishiki is located at Edsa Shangri-La, Manila's Mezzanine Level. For inquiries and reservations, call 633-8888 locals 2738 or 2739.

MASTERCARD SURVEY

Women travelers: Asia's new spending powerhouse

WOMEN travelers are Asia's new spending powerhouse.

This was one of the key findings of a recent MasterCard report showing a significant growth in the number of female tourists with spending patterns that rival those of their Western counterparts.

The report showed that the ratio of male to female travelers in Asia/Pacific has been dramatically shifting from 90:10 (males to females) thirty years ago, to around 60:40 (males to females) today—implying that about 56 million of the 139 million travelers in the region are women.

The figure is expected to increase with women travelers matching male travelers by 2011 and exceeding them in the long term.

According to Georgette Tan, vice president, Communications, Asia/Pacific, MasterCard International, "Travel statistics are, by and large, country and regions oriented, and rarely reflect gender breakdowns."

"This report is ground breaking as it provides valuable information on women travelers, the fastest growing market segment for the travel industry."

"Researching their current role and potential in shaping travel patterns and demands in Asia/Pacific is of crucial importance to the success of the industry as a whole. It is time to focus on women travelers."

Understanding Asian women

MasterCard's Asian Lifestyles Survey that monitors travel attitudes and trends among male and female travelers in 13 markets in the Asia/Pacific indicates that 77.5 percent of women consider travel as important for their lifestyles.

Another 36.7 percent reported that they have taken at least one international flight for personal travel purposes in the past 12 months.

The survey also reveals that the most important planning source for women is word of mouth contacts with family, friends and colleagues.

The Internet and travel agents tied for second and third positions.

Women are also the travel planners. US travel consultant Marybeth Bond reports that for family travel in the USA, 70 percent of travel decisions are made by women. Travel agents in Singapore confirm this figure.

While 75 percent of women in the United States take nature, adventure or cultural trips, their Asian counterparts prefer to shop and pamper themselves at spas and resorts.

According to MasterCard's Asian Lifestyles Survey, shopping ranks a clear first in terms of preferred travel activities for women.

This is followed by visiting places of cultural/historic interest and beach resorts.

Asian women also differ in their shopping patterns compared to their western counterparts.

Shopping as the primary purpose of a holiday does not have such a high priority for women in Europe or the USA, where shopping is perceived much more as a secondary activity and shopping lists consist of souvenirs and locally produced crafts.

Asian women in contrast, zero in on branded goods, such as apparel, shoes, handbags, accessories, perfumes and other toiletries.

Assuming conservatively that women travelers spend twice as much as men, and that the ratio between men and women travelers will be 50:50 by 2011, the report estimated that \$13.4 billion will be spent by women travelers in four shopping destinations in Asia—Seoul, Hong Kong, Singapore and Bangkok.

Travel habits

Asian women are more family-oriented, placing time with family high on their list of priorities for travel. An interesting pattern is the trend towards mother-daughter and mother-daughter-granddaughter travel in Asia/Pacific.

High disposable incomes of one generation combined with travel-savvy planning skills of another generation are sending these intergenerational family teams all over Asia/Pacific to shop, pamper themselves at spas and visit luxury resorts.

Women travelers focus more on physical and psychological safety as compared to men.

This includes obtaining information on the location and security of the hotel and destination, and checking on travel agency credentials.

A high emphasis on personal safety may explain why women rate word of mouth as the number one source of information, ahead of travel agents and the Internet.

This is in contrast to men who appear to be more likely to use the Internet as their first planning source.

Business travelers

MasterCard's Asian Lifestyles Survey data revealed that more women business travelers were younger (aged 30 and below) than men (32.4 percent for men compared to 36.6 percent for women).

Men business travelers tend to be older, aged 41 and above (34.4 percent for men compared to 31.1 percent for women). Women business travelers also tend to be single (41.7 percent).

Asian women business travelers are one of the fastest growing segments of the business travel market.

When asked whether or not they would travel more on business in the next twelve months than in the previous twelve months, more women (41.6 percent) than men (39.5 percent) replied "yes."

This is consistent with trends in North America and Europe.

Commissioned by MasterCard and conducted by the independent research team of Sree Kumar Siddique, the report analyzes the impact of an increasing volume of women travelers within the Asia/Pacific region and sheds light on their travel habits.

The report is part of the MasterCard Insights series of ongoing research and analysis of business dynamics, financial policies and regulatory activities in the Asia/Pacific region.

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BUSINESSMonday

Techies enter battle of the business plans

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

IT IS the nation's first technology and innovation business plan contest, conceived by high-flying Filipinos in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Called the Philippine Emerging Start-ups Open or Peso, it is patterned after MIT's renowned business challenge that brings out the best in new ideas.

Supporting the effort is the Ayala Foundation and a consortium of leading universities.

Linking techies with industry

Peso is a contest to be held every year to help create start-up firms that are intensive in technology and innovation.

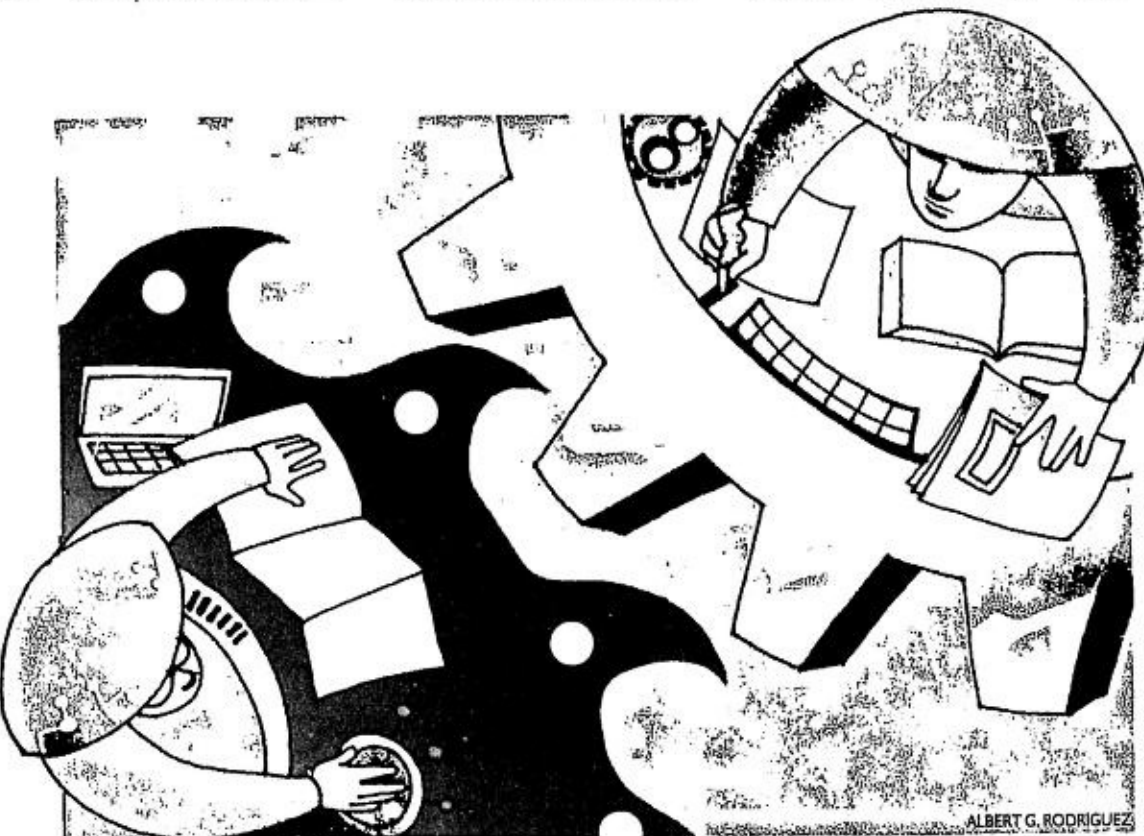
It coordinates a whole network of entrepreneurs, professionals, venture capitalists and experts from academe.

The support system will empower techno-entrepreneurs as they venture from generating ideas to marketing their innovations.

The hope is not only to multiply jobs but also to raise the knowledge base of Filipinos in a hi-tech world.

Two operating teams, one in the United States and one here, comprise Peso.

The one abroad is made of alumni and graduate engineering students of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



The branch in the Philippines consists of achievers in business and industry.

Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima serves in the board of directors.

Driving tricycles

The lead organizer in the US is Neil Ruiz, a Ph.D. candidate at MIT. The CEO of Peso Philippines is Federico Gonzalez, former president of San Miguel Properties Inc.

"As the son of Filipino parents who were lucky to escape poverty by migrating to the United States, I had the privilege of being exposed to a plethora of opportunities," says Ruiz. "While some of my cousins were struggling under the hot sun driving tricycles for a living, I had the opportunity to debate with my classmates about the merits of philosophers' theories."

He learned a few years ago that his father had raised his brother

and cousins via remittances sent to his native Pangasinan.

Ruiz decided that he would do his share to help.

"I have returned to the Philippines as an overseas returnee worker (ORW) to help build an environment that will, hopefully, expose many Filipinos to the same opportunities I had," he says.

Connect, create, catalyze

Supporting Peso are prominent firms and organizations in both

the Philippines and the United States. The Ayala Foundation is a key pillar of support. Members of the consortium from academe include:

- Asian Institute of Management
- Ateneo de Manila
- Central Luzon State University
- De La Salle University
- Mapua Institute of Technology
- Silliman University
- University of Asia and the Pacific

Three verbs are key to the effort: connect, create and catalyze.

The program (<http://web.mit.edu/peso/>) links people across academe, industry, finance, and government. It forms teams trained in writing solid techno business plans.

The example of MIT

This Filipino program takes after the prime US business plan contest, the \$50K Entrepreneurship Competition of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In fact Peso is guided by the MIT \$50K organizing committee.

"In the same way that the MIT \$50K has stimulated the creation of over 60 companies with an aggregate value of \$10.5 billion in its 15 years of existence, we hope that Peso will serve as a catalyst for stimulating the Philippine economy," says Ruiz.

The first phase of Peso begins with the Technopreneurship Workshops: they provide the par-

ticipants an overview of hi-tech start-ups.

Each Peso team should have three to five members, including one with technical expertise and another with business management savvy.

The members can be professionals, faculty, or students.

But at least one member should be currently enrolled in a degree program of higher learning.

An alley to Silicon Valley

Following is the schedule of Technopreneurship workshops.

• Introduction to Technopreneurship, University of Asia and the Pacific, Feb. 26, 2005;

• Idea Generation and Evaluation, Intellectual Property, University of the Philippines, March 5, 2005;

• Recruiting and Retaining a Team, Starting-up, De La Salle University, Manila, March 19, 2005;

• Pitching Your Idea, Ateneo de Manila University, April 2, 2005.

"A lot of young professionals we talk to in Silicon Valley say, 'Wow, we're looking for a company in the Philippines to outsource. But we don't know how. Who do we talk to?'" Ruiz told a Net paper. "We need to connect them here."

(For more information, call Peso at 687-3416. Comments to darroyo@philonline.com)

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THE BARREN hills of Montalban are showing signs of new life

Utility lends hand to Montalban project

"IT TAKES 500 years for nature to replace what man takes five years to destroy," says Nat de la Peña, a forester and staff assistant at Meralco's logistics department.

Nat is part of the 30-person team that runs the Forestry Regeneration and Parks Development Project (FRPDP) in Barangay Puray, Montalban, Rizal.

The 927-hectare area, once covered with cogon and *talahib*, has been reforested, its 435 ha planted with acacia and eucalyptus seedlings.

Bounded on the north by Angat Watershed Forest Reserve and by the Marikina watershed on its eastern and southern borders, the Meralco project site was practically a grassland—the result of illegal logging (a livelihood in the area), slash-and-burn cultivation and grassfires.

Soil erosion was a perennial problem carrying off silts to the Montalban rivers and eventually, Manila Bay.

In 1991, Meralco and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources signed a memorandum of agreement placing the land under the FRPDP, also known as the Meralco Industrial Tree Plantation Project.

It gives Meralco the responsibility to reforest and transform the open denuded brushland into productive areas.

Now, the project has been reforested with 723,478 surviving trees, which helped prevent soil erosion, improved the soil condition in the area and contributed to the reduction of carbon dioxide in the area (atmospheric accumulation of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide results in global warming).

It has also provided employment to the locality, particularly to the Dumagats—an ethnic group found in the provinces of Nueva Ecija, Isabela, Camarines Sur and Bulacan. Manpower used in the area is sourced locally, em-

ploying the Dumagats in nursery maintenance, replanting, ring-weeding and forest inventory.

With the project's development, infrastructure and electrification have been ushered in. Access roads have been constructed to link the area to the barangay. Plantation roads and foot trails have also been made allowing the Dumagats to bring their produce to the cities.

So why is an electric company into forestation?

"Environmental stewardship has always been part of Meralco's corporate social responsibility," explains Fred Ramos, head of corporate safety.

Meralco's commitment to this philosophy was bolstered with the creation of the Corporate Social Responsibility office in January 2001.

In the past three years, the CSRO has been Meralco's strong arm in the areas of social investment, community sponsorship, workplace and environment stewardship.

The journey hasn't been an easy one for Meralco's foresters. They have had to come up against people who discouraged them saying the area soil isn't conducive for planting and the land is steep.

Malaria has been a perennial problem and they have had to deal with forest fires, which threaten to wipe out everything they had toiled for years.

Foot patrolmen are now deployed on rotation to protect the area from fires and other elements of destruction.

De la Peña, whose family used to be in the logging business in the Visayas, has seen how the industry has ravaged the environment.

Sent to Los Baños to study forestry and now a forester himself, De la Peña sees it as his advocacy to make up to Mother Earth for the excesses of the previous generations.

BUSINESSMonday

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

Sugar industry rides off into new sunrise

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IN VICTORIAS City, Negros Occidental, a team of agricultural scientists are on a singular mission: to produce a sugarcane variety that yields more sugar, grows faster, resists common pests and do not need as much commercial fertilizers.

It is a long and expensive process—marked with significantly more failures than successes—but the agronomists, pathologists, entomologists and agriculturists of the Philippine Sugar Research Institute Foundation Inc. are not about to give up.

Philsurin was formed in 1995 to respond to the call for the private sector to advance sugar research and development work.

In the eight years since Philsurin took over the sugar

breeding station of Victorias Milling Corp. in 1997, its scientists have produced nine high-yielding varieties of sugarcane, which contributed significantly to the increase in the country's sugar production.

Record production

Philsurin data showed that sugar production rose by a hefty 43.55 percent, from 1.63 million metric tons in 1999 to 2.34 million metric tons in crop year 2003-2004—the highest in 20 years.

This was largely due to the planting of a new breed of sugarcane varieties, which are planted to almost half of the area planted to sugarcane.

The Sugar Regulatory Administration produced seven of these varieties, while Philsurin contributed another seven.

Philsurin's research work is financed through a contribution of P2 per 50-kilogram bag of sugar from sugar millers and planters.

Philsurin has invested some P467 million in research, development and extension work over the last eight years, but generated some P8.48 billion in returns based on the increase in sugar production.

Philsurin director general Leon M. Arceo said, however, that Philsurin could not afford to rest on its laurels.

While sugar cane production has increased, pests and changing weather conditions remain real threats.

New opportunities

He added that there were opportunities for the Philippines to again enter the world market for sugar in a big way.

The Philippines used to be one of the world's biggest exporters of sugar.

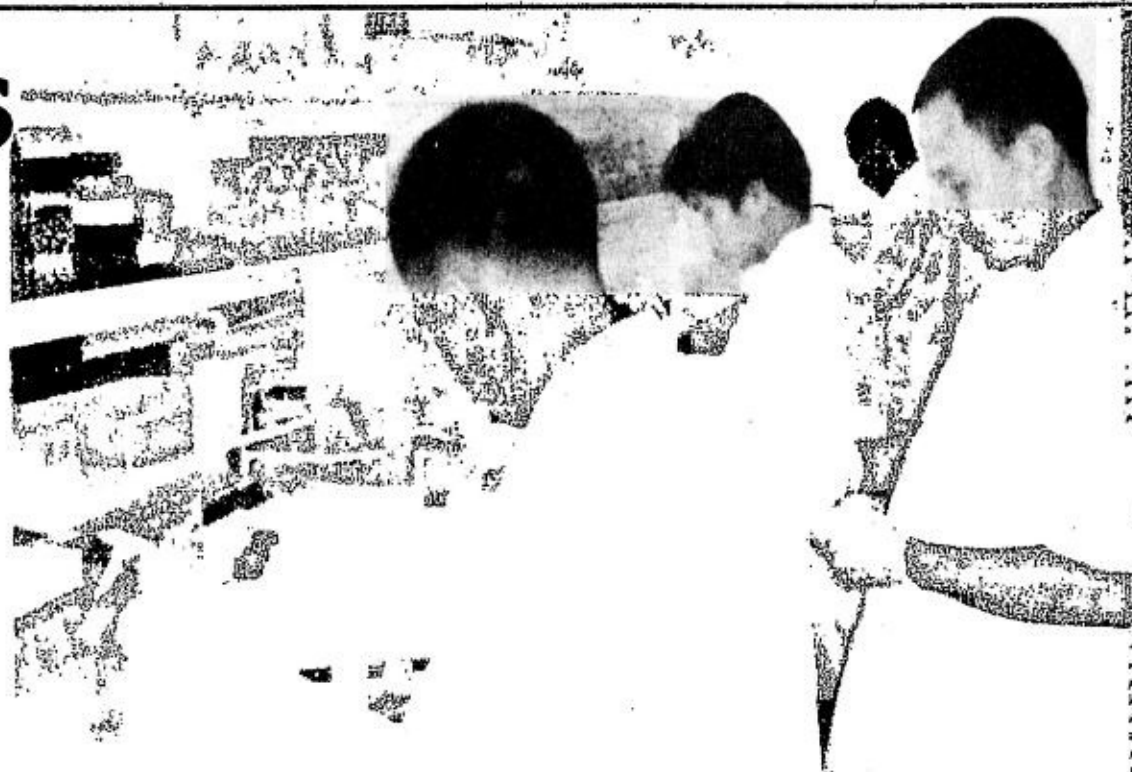
And until the mid-1970s, sugar was the country's biggest agricultural product, and found its way to neighboring countries in Asia, as well as the United States.

The sudden drop in sugar prices in the 1980s through the early 1990s, however, put an end to those heady days.

Sugar mills shut down almost simultaneously and many haciendas abandoned the sugar trade, leaving thousands of cane workers without a job.

Philsurin believes, however, that a new day has dawned for the sugar industry.

The Philippines currently ex-



SCIENTISTS and researchers at the Philsurin Biotechnology Laboratory seek to identify molecular markers for downy mildew and smut resistance in sugarcane.

ports sugar to China, Japan, South Korea and the United States; and other markets are being explored.

The country, however, would not be able to compete head to head against big sugar players, such as Brazil and Colombia, until production becomes more efficient.

Coming up with new and better breeds of HYVs is Philsurin's major contribution to the effort.

Breeding new HYVs that will outperform the best in the market is a tedious process that is definitely not for the impatient man.

The first step involves choosing the "parents" of the new breed from Philsurin's bank of as many as 200,000 seedlings.

When the first crop of promising varieties is chosen after eight months, it undergoes further testing and evaluation—both in the laboratories and in the actual fields.

Arceo said the chances of coming up with even one outstanding variety after seven years of study were slim, but always worth pursuing.

To illustrate, the Victorias breeding station only released 10 HYVs in 30 years of operation.

Philsurin added to Victorias' research and with its own breakthroughs, improved the odds of producing HYVs.

It has so far produced nine varieties, the latest of which is the PS-4 and PS-5, which are ready for commercial planting in crop year 2005-2006.

Demand-based research

Arceo said Philsurin's research is demand based, which means that the research is done to address specific needs, such as resistance to a particular pest and ability to grow in extreme weather conditions.

Philsurin produces designer

sugarcane, so to speak.

The PS-4, for instance, has high sugar content and is resistant to downy mildew, a common disease that reduces sugar production.

Fields planted to this variety can yield an average of 91 tons of cane and 177 50-kilo bags of sugar per hectare.

The PS-5, on the other hand, is fast growing and can tolerate drought conditions.

It is resistant to smut (another common disease), but is susceptible to downy mildew and mosaic.

Fields with PS-5 can produce about 100 tons of cane and 184 50-kilo bags of sugar per hectare.

These new varieties will easily outperform the best in the market, but Philsurin scientists are already busy working on the next varieties.

For Philsurin, the quest for the super variety of sugarcane continues.



BREEDING new varieties is Philsurin's most expensive activity.




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Spain's Queen Sophia wears this Filipino's creations

By Fran Katigbak

HAINEE Batua's accessories shop can easily be overlooked in the maze of identical stalls at the Greenhills Shopping Complex.

Yet, for seven years, the 29-year-old accessories designer has maintained her single outlet amid dozens of competitors and turned it into a profitable venture.

"Know what people want," she says. "That will keep you in the accessories trade."

Hainee learned the ropes of running a business at a young age through her family's furniture shop.

She dabbled in making beads accessories in high school, but her creativity was harnessed when the Batuas decided

to shift their business to fine jewelry.

Most Filipinos at that time were only familiar with jewelry staples like diamonds, pearls and solid gold.

After having designed fine jewelry for a long time, however, Hainee branched out to creating colorful beads accessories.

"I created the fun stuff," she says. "Those that have color to avoid the mediocre."

Making accessories was therapeutic for Hainee as well.

"It's (therapy) stress-related," she explains. "I've been designing fine jewelry before *pa* and I was pregnant with my youngest child."

Hainee eventually opened her own



BEADWORK for bags



HAINEE Batua (top photo) creates hip, colorful pieces like necklaces, "to avoid the mediocre."

PHOTOS BY FRAN KATIGBAK

Software for Utility Computing

If you're like most IT leaders today, you may be experiencing "the CIO squeeze" as you're caught between two conflicting imperatives. At one end is the user community asking for more, more, more: they want more applications to automate their business, more data to make better decisions, and they want it all yesterday, if not sooner.

At the other end, you have the CEO and CFO demanding less, less, less: they want you to spend less on data centers, less on hardware, and less on people - all while providing flawless service so that there are fewer complaints from the user community.

And of course, you have to do it all with the existing technology in which your company has already made a major investment - a complex and heterogeneous environment of Web servers, application servers, databases, and hardware all from a variety of different vendors.

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- Increased productivity for IT professionals
- Improved alignment between IT and business

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Queen City to again host Advertising Congress

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Cebu will again host this year's advertising congress (AdCon), edging out other cities like Bacolod, Davao and Baguio that have shown interest to host the big event.

The AdCon committee chaired by Greg Nilles of the Advertising Suppliers Association of the Philippines (Asap) decided on Wednesday night that Cebu would be the venue of the AdCon this November, said Government Media Affairs Secretary Cerge Remonde, outgoing chair of the Advertising Board (AdBoard).

This is the third time that Cebu will be hosting the AdCon, he said.

Cebu City hosted the AdCon in 1999 and 2001. In 2003, the AdCon was held in Baguio City.

Remonde said Cebu won over the other cities for a number of reasons.

Among these were the city's available facilities and amenities, the Cebuanos' hospitality and the efficiency of the city government.

"Cebu is really the best, the convention city in the Philippines right now. It has the facilities that is perfect for a very big and classy Congress like the Ad congress which the other cities do not have, plus the hospitality of the Cebuanos and the efficiency of the city government," Remonde said yesterday.

He said officials of other cities especially Bacolod tried to convince him to hold the event in their area, but he said he had no control over the selection of the venue.

Remonde, who also chairs the oversight committee of the Ad-



CEBU won the bid to host the AdCon due partly to its many attractions. One is Casa Gorordo, which is now maintained as a museum by the Ramon Aboitiz Foundation.

Con, said he did not involve himself too much in the discussions to dispel speculations that he used his influence to let Cebu again host the next AdCon.

Remonde said the decision did not come as a surprise because Cebu always topped in the surveys conducted by the nine organizations under the AdBoard.

He, however, said that the credit should be given to the people behind the Cebu Visitors and Convention Bureau (CVCB) headed by hotelier Patrick Gregorio and re-

gional director Patria Aurora Roa of the Department of Tourism (DOT), and also the city government.

"The fact that Cebu always emerges as the top choice of advertising executives, agencies, this is something that we should be proud of," he said.

Like in the previous years, Remonde is expecting between 3,000 to 4,000 delegates to register although around 15,000 to 20,000 individuals will actually come and observe the activity.

He pointed out that the city government should maintain the peace and order situation and clean up the different places during the event.

Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña earlier promised to give at least P500,000 to the organizers for the AdCon, if the city would be selected to host the event.

Spain's ...

From page B3-2

business armed with a P50,000 capital, the influence of her family's business savvy, and the creativity and passion for making beads accessories.

The venture initially sold 20 items, mostly necklaces set with semi-precious stones.

At least 30 items are now sold in a day, with sales increasing to almost 100 items a day during the Christmas season.

From fashion and wedding accessories to home accessories, Hainee's shop produces almost everything that can be decorated with beads. It also sells raw materials for beadwork enthusiasts.

The beads accessories have been exported to Singapore, London, Italy, New York and Los Angeles. Locally, they are distributed in the Makati and Alabang areas.

Even famous personalities—Queen Sophia of Spain among them—have purchased Hainee's creations.

What began as a hobby grew into a business that earns "enough to pay 10 employees working in Makati" monthly, says Hainee.

If there are orders from abroad, the shop profits just as much in only a week, while a minimum five orders are enough for a month's survival.

Good PR abilities, a keen eye for design, and studying market preference are a must for anyone who wants to go into the accessories trade, Hainee shares.

"Be vocal," she adds. "Give suggestions, but do not insist on a product that doesn't suit the customer. Accessories are useless if these don't complement the person."

Keeping updated with trends and foreign designs is likewise important, especially since Hainee constantly varies her concepts for personalized accessories.

Only six pieces are made of each of her designs because she knows customers don't want to spot exactly the same accessories on others.

As for giving in to what people want, Hainee puts a certain limit.

"Bring out your own ideas. Execute them," she says. "Don't lose yourself in the process of producing what people want."

Empowering ...

From page B3-4

With the obvious limited financial capabilities of the beneficiaries who belong to the poverty threshold group, the micro-finance program demands no collateral in the loans applied. Instead, the field staff helps develop peer support and peer pressure among the SLC members who are made accountable for each other.

Each SLC shares the responsibilities of developing the components of the micro-finance program.

On top of the micro lending and savings mobilization, the program also provides micro-insurance for SLC members and their dependents covering sickness, accident, permanent disability and death. The program also provides retirement and pension fund for members.

Humanitarian mission

G7Bank further complemented its thrust of providing livelihood opportunities to the poor communities here with humanitarian missions and projects.

It set up the FLC Foundation, which periodically provides free medical services and assistance to indigents. Some 5,000 beneficiaries from Camarines Sur, Albay and Catanduanes have availed themselves of the foundation's medical services and assistance.

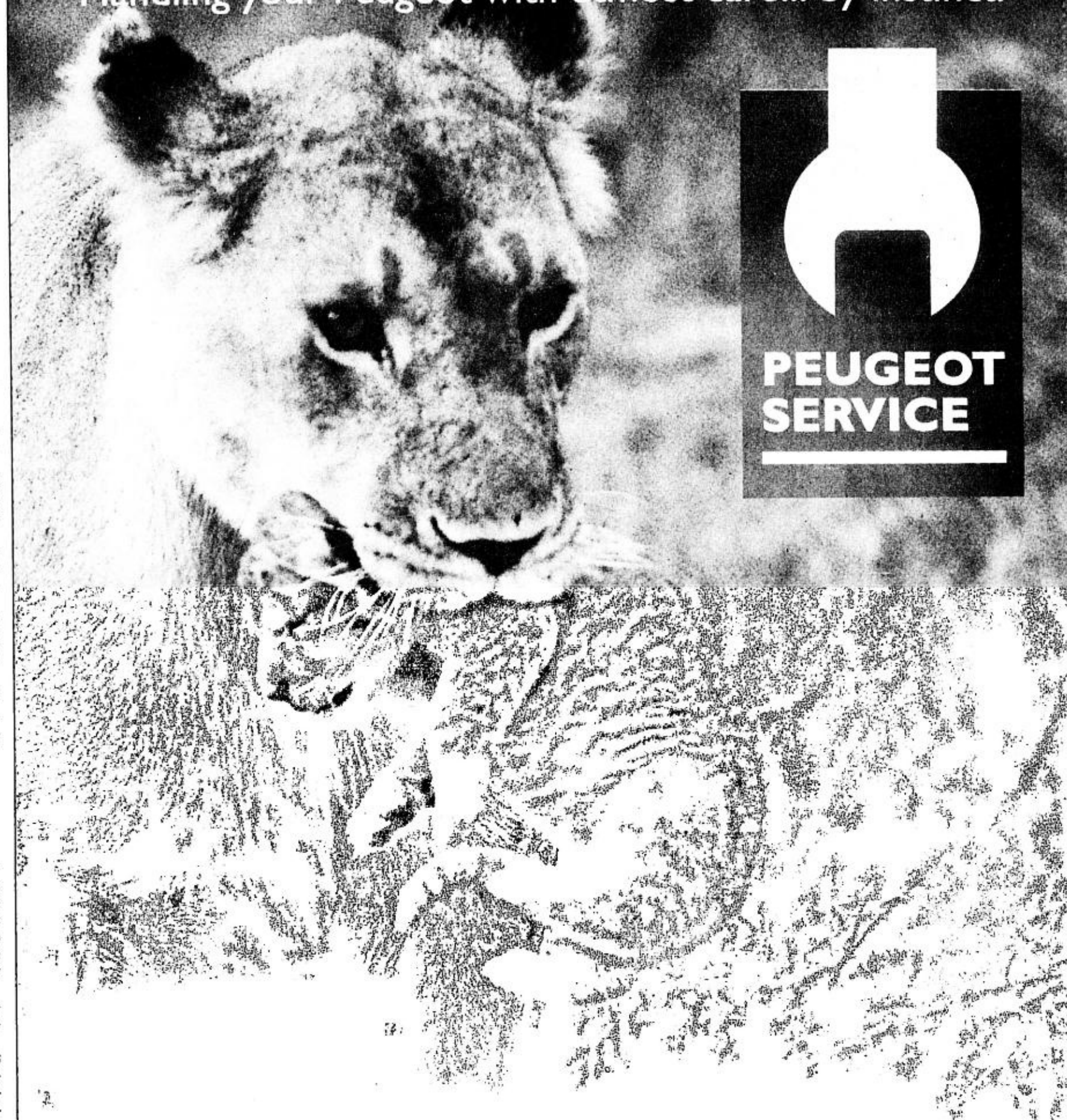
Under a special project, the foundation donated 60 wheelchairs to selected indigents with disabilities and organized a de-worming and sanitation campaign in Iriga City and the town of Nabua, which benefited 800 grade school kids.

Working with the National Voluntary Blood Services Program (NVBSP) and the Bicol Medical Center (BMC), the FLC Foundation conducts a yearly blood donation campaign by mobilizing G7Bank's employees, friends and clients. It has so far turned over 12,000 cc of blood to the NVBSP and BMC.

"Maybe these initiatives of our company are just a drop in a bucket, but we feel that we are heading in the right direction," Cu said. Juan Escandor Jr., Southern Luzon Bureau

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[illegible]

LAO Lianben's
self-portrait

/C4

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TUCKED away in a quiet Pasay compound, a 50-year-old wooden house with enormous rooms, high ceilings and large windows make a perfect home for Avellana Art Gallery.

Avellana Art Gallery
sparks Pasay revival

FB. HARRISON - Street in Pasay is one of those simply dreadful Manila places. In that totally improbable location hides a rare urban sanctuary.

Once, the street was a block away from the sea, running parallel to Roxas Boulevard, as it still does now. People have forgotten that before it was named after Manuel Roxas, the road was Dewey Boulevard, a landscaped parkway and promenade along Manila Bay.

Reclamation pushed the shore much farther away from where it used to be on the Pasay stretch of the boulevard. The Dewey Boulevard era died when it lost its vital connection to the sea.

FB. Harrison died together with Dewey Boulevard. From a quiet residential location, it went the way most Manila streets did. Unregulated development mushroomed. The street's character vanished.

But the street has managed to retain some of that vanished character. The little that remains today is hidden from public view, behind high

PRIDE
OF PLACEAugusto
E. Villalon

The city that the long Cuneta years vandalized and debased may yet see a renewal

walls and guarded gates that shield residential compounds within which are now 50-year-old heritage houses, exactly what the old FB. Harrison looked like.

The compounds date back to a forgotten, unappreciated period of Philippine history, the post-World War II era of the late 1940s to '50s that was a vigorous time of recovery and reconstruction when the eco-

nomie and living standard of the country was next to Japan's. Asia looked up to us then.

It was during that era when property owners developed compounds in Pasay, considered a great location because of its clean seaside air.

Compound houses, often identical, were usually built along both sides of a long central driveway. The two-story concrete and wood structures had interiors with four-meter-high ceilings (today, ceilings measure below three meters), large windows, and with some rooms opening out to wide verandahs on the upper and lower floors.

These were the days before air-conditioning, so the houses were designed for maximum air circulation. High ceilings kept interiors cool; wide overhangs kept the sun from penetrating too deep into the house; and insulating properties of wooden walls maintained coolness in the house, a contrast to today's concrete walls that retain heat.

Avellana Art Gallery moved into a compound house around two years ago. It chose a house because its

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*Computed based on the Petron XCS Plus rate of Php 28.00 per liter and the average motorist's consumption of 40 liters per week. See flyers for details. Membership fee is FREE for the first year. Visit any participating Petron station, BPI branch, BPI Family Bank branch, Express Banking Center or www.bpiexpressonline.com. Promo is from Oct. 21, 2004 - April 30, 2005. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2521, Series of 2004.



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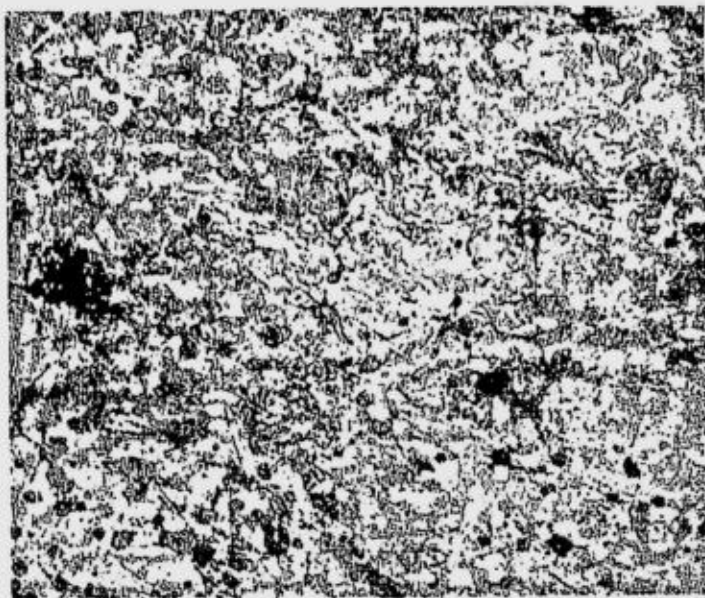
28 M Bitbites-BBQ	1 T Cinnamon Roll	2 W Rainbow Chums Color Me Berry	3 Th Peanut Butter Roll	4 F Rainbow Chums Snowy Glaze	S Loco

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How Thoughtful. How Pinoy.



"SAN Agustin Church," by Al Perez



"REVELRY," by Bien Benitez

Benitez at Borders, Bulacan scenes at Renaissance, Valdizno at Alliance

BORDERS (GE Building, 2291 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati) presents the artworks of Bien Benitez on March 3-19. The exhibit highlights pinpoints of dripped colors that complement each other through spatial position, giving an artwork a

three-dimensional feel. Call 8932908.

ALLIANCE Total Gallery (2/F, 209 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati) features Trek Valdizno's "Non-Geographically Specific Famil-

ilarity" until March 18. The exhibit displays sculptures, installations, drawings and paintings. Call 8957585/ 8957441.

HERITAGE Art Center (SM Megamall) features Roberto Dancel Duldulao's "Images by the Bay" on March 8-17. The exhibit presents 33 abstract paintings. Call 6468809/ 0915-4605450.

THE BIG & Small (3/F, Promenade Bldg., Wilson St., San Juan) presents Brenda Palco and James Zabala's "Random Gods" until March 5. The artists use images and other materials randomly assembled into mixed-media works. Call 6877425/ 7264277.

MIRASOL Art Gallery showcases "Rites of Summer" starting March

1. Participating artists painted the sites in Bulacan, Pasig and La Union. Call Rey Resurreccion at 0920-4127142 or Jules Anthony Fajardo, 0915-4061575.

VISUAL ARTS

THE DRAWING ROOM (Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan

Ave., Makati) mounts Jayson Oliveira's "Attack Painter" until March 12. The artist's canvases have been cut up, slashed, boarded up and bombarded with dubious color schemes. Call 8976990/ 8977877.

WILSON Ma, Ferdinand Montemayor and Emmanuel Garibay hold their respective shows of recent works on canvas and paper until March 19 at Boston Gallery (72 Boston St., Cubao, QC). Call 7229205.

CHIQUEI Rodriguez's travels to Eu-



"NEW Blocks from the Sea," by Roberto Duldulao

rope have resulted in 20 acrylic paintings on exhibit until March 20 at Starbucks Coffee 6750, Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

AYALA Museum features "Power + Faith + Image: Philippine Art in Ivory from the 16th to the 19th Century" until Sept. 24. The show is an assemblage of popular ecclesiastical images and secular objects made of ivory produced by Philippine carvers from the 16th to the 19th century. "The Diorama Experience," an exhibition that depicts 60 major historical events in Philippine history, is also ongoing. Ayala Museum is at the corner of Makati Avenue and De la Rosa Street, Makati. Call 7577117 to 21.

MERIAL Philippines pays tribute to all mothers in the company's 2005 calendar. The works of Hermes Alegre, Jovito Andres, Angel Cacnio, Cris Cruz, Emmanuel Garibay, Jun

Martinez, Lydia Velasco, Frank Vera-no and William Yu in oil, watercolor, pastel and acrylic depict the symbol of love and devotion. Call 6891030 to 35.

MANILA-BASED French abstractionist Michel Herbert opens his third solo show at the UP Vargas Museum on March 3. Titled "Overtures," the show features large-scale unframed works. This time he liberates the colors of his canvases completely with vivid luminosity and open strokes of paint. Herbert has consistently sought to free his paintings from norms and rules that contain them in frames and frameworks. The set of new paintings evoke more brilliance and are seen best when not overly lighted. The exhibition will run until May. Herbert will have a live painting performance on April 9 at 3 p.m.



RENAISSANCE Art Gallery (SM Megamall) showcases "Vanishing Scenes" on March 8-17. Participating artists are Al Perez, Danny Pang, Ernie Velasquez and Cris Velasco. The show features depictions of various places in Bulacan that offer a wealth of architectural and historic legacy. Call 0917-8361099.

Sinoy artists under the Rooster's shadow

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

TWO contemporary artists currently exhibiting their works provide gallery-goers with precious insights on how the creative imagination of the Chinoy artist works.

The career of William Yu took a dramatic turn when the artist became a born-again Christian a few years ago. His religious conversion had opened new doors for his art to grow, evolve and consequently become one with his personal beliefs and convictions.

Dubbed "Psalms of Hope: In Praise of God in the Year of the Rooster," the exhibit (Metro Gallery, 455 P. Guevarra St. San Juan, until March 4), shows the Rooster not merely as an auspicious symbol of the Chinese zodiac but as a creature with religious and spiritual significance (remember how Judas' treachery was foreshadowed by the crowing of the cock?)

In past shows, Yu has explored such well-loved Filipino icons as the Mother and Child, family, elderly, and of day-to-day encounters. Most of his past work also featured trademark colorful fowl and a bevy of floral elements in some arcadian setting.

Yu focuses this time on the animal that, in the Chinese calendar, is associated with fierceness, agility, speed and fighting prowess—qualities that augur well for all those staunch believers in Chinese horoscope and geomancy.

The works reveal Yu's abiding fascination with the mysteries of God's creation, as he makes implicit what the paintings evoke by the energizing power of the fowl that ranks among the favorites of Filipino artists. Roost-



"FISHPOND" I, by Jose Ceriola

ers are favored by Filipinos for their gaming skills, a highly prized animal that is a source of pride for owners and breeders alike.

Yu annotates his paintings with words of wisdom culled from the Holy Bible, enriching the viewer's appreciation of the link between image and meaning.

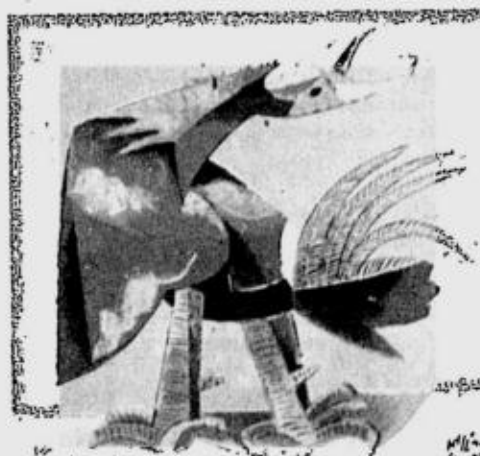
In his trademark bold-and-brisk brushwork, the hallmark of his vaunted expressionism, he takes delight in improvisation, plunging straight into a composition, unencumbered by rigid rules and dogmas, indeed breaking conventions as he gives vent to his experimentations.

At the Genesis Gallery, another Chinoy artist Jose Ceriola (his maternal name is Uy) uses watercolor in tackling otherwise humdrum scenes—waterscapes and street scenes—that have fortuitously been inspired by his Chinese progeny, being of mixed Filipino-Chinese ancestry.

The exhibit, dubbed "Watercolor Vignettes," consists of watercolor renderings of various places in China, particularly in Quilin, in their typical workaday life, which the artist had visited a couple of years ago to renew ties with long-lost relatives.

The scenes amply prove his virtuosity of impregnating the paper with just enough color mixed with water, and investing the scenes with energy and dynamism.

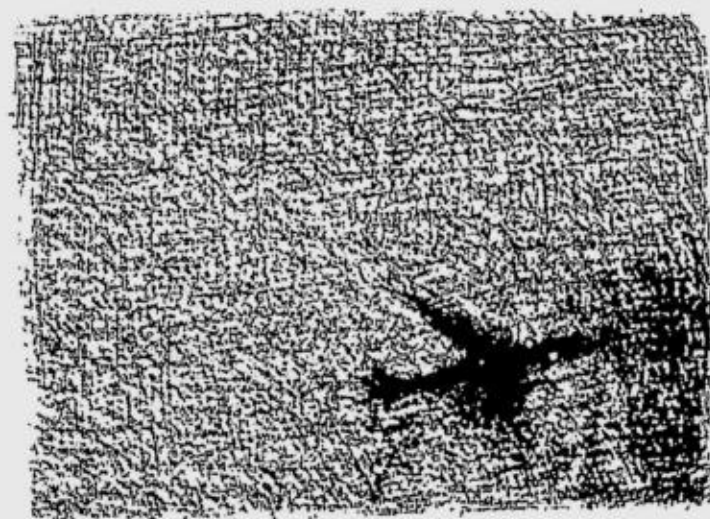
Ceriola, who is a Hall of Famer in the Annual Kulay sa Tubig competition, has made a name for his sparkling renditions of musical bands roaming the streets during town fiestas. We took special interest in his rare ability to delineate the instruments and the subtle contrasts with the musicians' uniforms.



"VICTORY Is Ours at Last," by William Yu

Ceriola has always been one artist who never repeated himself, opting to take up a more challenging subject and viewpoint. In this fifth solo exhibit, the artist's piece de resistance is a huge (41" x 66") rendering of a huge colony of chickens, which he calls "Family"—a monumental work if one considers the delicacy of the medium proudly living up to the enormity of the subject. The most endearing facet of this work is his rendering of the habitat, enlivened by the varied activities indulged in by his cast of chickens, from the mother hen responding to a love call to the chicks pecking on morsels on the ground.

There are many good watercolor artists, some better than others and truly talented but Ceriola is, without doubt, of a rare and special breed. His gifts are truly something to crow about.



"NIGHTPLANE," by Christine Quisumbing

US-based artists in Mag:Net group show

A SHIFT of environment elicits a certain degree of adaptation, just so to a point that one never loses the remembrance of an origin, a point of departure, a sense of home.

This is the premise of "Just Visiting" at the Mag:Net Gallery on Paseo de Roxas. Curated by Roberto Chabet, it's a group show by US-based artists Dormafe Baluyos, Jennifer Berklich, Ernest Concepcion, Emmanuel Migriño, Riza Manalo and Christine Quisumbing.

Baluyos' photographs of prism images are reminiscent of butterflies and psychedelic acid color patterns which seem to induce a trance-like state.

Berklich's work, "Greyhound," a series of oil paintings, raises questions on perception and reality and how documented images can be altered. The images she used were taken from a trip on a Greyhound bus. These images, resembling blue globules floating on a blank TV monitor, are then fragmented and foregrounded in

an expanse of black.

Manalo's "Refractive Stare" is composed of small wooden box frames with each box containing small objects "fossilized" in wax, the acrylic plastic which covers them is etched with closely-knit diagonal lines on one side that it produces glare when hit upon by light on the surface.

Concepcion's pen and ink drawings of fighting, robots, monsters and action figures recreate the flat battleground of playground justice.

Migriño's "The Sound Of A Wing Being Stretched" is a black and white digital print of a bird's wing. The title echoes the famous zen koan (the sound of one hand clapping) but it may also refer to Migriño's band, Lumipad ("flew").

A sense of foreboding disaster figures in Christine Quisumbing Ramilo's charcoal drawings of airplanes as they are heavily drawn and shaded.

"Just Visiting" opens on March 2 at 6:30 p.m. at Mag:Net Gallery at the Paseo Center, Paseo de Roxas and Sedenor Street, Makati City. Call 8177895.



"CHINA" 6, by Ceriola

Pampanga mosaic mural to be unveiled

NAPOLION Abueva, National Artist for Sculpture, will unveil a mosaic mural inside Holy Angel University in Angeles City.

Titled "Kamulatan" (loose translation: epiphany), the 50-ft work was executed by Kapampangan artist Norman Tiotuico for the University's College of Arts and Sciences. The unveiling ceremonies will be held on March

7 at 4:30 p.m. Archbishop Paciano B. Aniceto of San Fernando will bless the mural.

The ceremonies will be followed by a free Kapampangan concert at the Center for Kapampangan Studies, featuring Mon David, ArtiSta. Rita, folk singer Totoy Bato, and the University chorale, string ensemble, band, rondalla and dance theater.



FEU student Jermain Wagan Alvarez grand prize winner at the 19th telephone directory cover art competition

PLDT announces art contest winners

JERMAINE Wagan Alvarez of the Far Eastern University won the grand prize in the 19th Telephone Directory Cover Visual Art National Competition with his unique entry in acrylic on wood, "Manggagawang Pilipino: Pinagbuklod ng Iisang Layunin, Kaya't Tawagin Natin Silang Mga Bagong Bayani."

Alvarez interpreted this year's theme, "OFWs-Mga Bagong Bayani," in the *letras y figuras* style.

Alvarez won P70,000 and a trophy rendered by National Artist Napoleon Abueva, while his school received a P30,000 donation and a plaque.

Alvarez' entry was the unanimous choice of the judges that included Abueva, National Museum director Cora Alvina, artist BenCab, art critic Alice Guillermo and artist Raul Lebajo.

Second prize winner Judeo Herrera of Tarlac State University went home with P60,000 and a trophy for his mixed-media entry, "Transcendental Value of Love." His school received P25,000.

Redentor Castillo Jr. of the University of Northern Philippines, Vigan City, Ilocos Sur, won third place with his acrylic-on-canvas piece, "Pagbabalik ng Mga Bagong Bayani, Dala Ay Kaginhawahan sa Sariling Lahi." He received P50,000 and a trophy. His school got P20,000.

Other winners: Rex Dasig Aguilar of University of the East-Caloocan City, "Kilala Ko Sila," done on Japanese paper (fourth place with a prize of P40,000, and P15,000 for his school); David Joel Quindoy of Eartist, "Flight of Modern Heroes" (fifth place with a prize of P35,000, and P10,000 for his school); Gerald B. Mungcal of Tarlac State University, "Unsung Heroes" (first honorable mention); Buen J. Abrigo, University of the Philippines, "Mga Bayani..." (second honorable mention); and Hari Martin Lualhati, UP, "Halaga ng Bagong Bayani" (third honorable mention).

The top entry will be featured on the covers of the Metro Manila directories while the 2nd-5th place entries will grace the covers of the Metro Suburban and provincial telephone books.

All the entries are on exhibit at National Museum.

Cultural tour of the Ilocos

THE GAMENG Ilocos, a cultural study advocacy tour of the Ilocandia region, will run on March 4-6. The tour will visit churches, old homes and museums, savor culinary delicacies, and shop for antiques and crafts.

The tour package is either by bus or plane to suit one's budget. All participants will enjoy accommodations at Fort Ilocandia, Laoag, Ilocos Norte, and air-conditioned bus transfers.

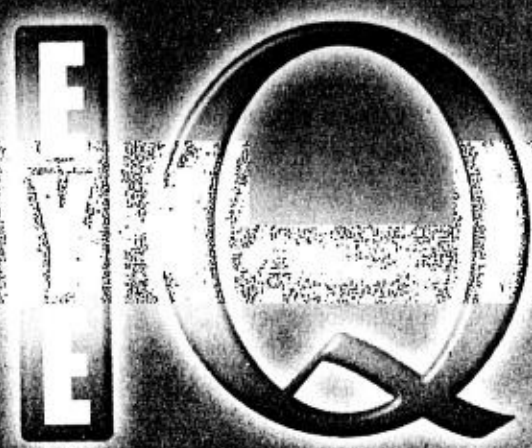
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Registration and payments are accepted at the G/F National Museum of the Filipino People, Valencia Circle, Rizal Park, Manila; or at Chinabank account number 202-002361-2. Fax the deposit slip to 4042685.

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LAO LIANBEN

Drawn to life

By Leovino Ma. Garcia
Contributor

"I ONLY paint portraits"—this is the only saying known that can be attributed to Rembrandt.

Indeed, it has been often remarked that every portrait is a self-portrait. In the end, every painter only paints himself or herself.

Those who have not yet seen Lao Lianben's exhibit—"Figures and a Man of Few Words" at Jorge Vargas Museum in UP Diliman—have in store for themselves the exquisite pleasure of discovering his "Self-Portrait."

Even devotees of Lao may be taken by surprise to know that this is the third instance when Lao has done a self-portrait. The first one is a 1989 "Self-Portrait" reproduced in the book, "13 Painters for the 21st Century"; the second (in the form of a big *bulul*) was commissioned by the noted collector Paulino Que.

In this third "Self-Portrait," there is a delicacy and economy of strokes and colors that evoke the reserve of serenity and calm that is Lao Lianben. A blessed moment of the recognition of Lao's subjectivity—a recognition which is not a resemblance.

Drawing out self-presence

There is no resemblance at all between this "Self-Portrait" and Lao. Rightly so, since a self-portrait (or a portrait, for that matter) is never a matter of strict resem-

blance.

A portrait is not the objective re-presentation of a subject but the drawing out to presence of the subjectivity of the self. By subjectivity, one means here "the life of the spirit," which the master artist, by his brush strokes, renders alive. Paradoxically, subjectivity or "interiority" takes place itself on the flat surface or "exteriority" of the canvas. In a portrait, the painter brings the subject of the painting in relation to itself. He draws out the self to presence.

Lao remembers seeing an HBO movie where the main character, an artist, was making a sculpture of a female model. The model remarked that the sculpture didn't look at all like her. "Of course not," retorted the sculptor, "it is my self-portrait."

Lao also recounts how, one day, a Buddhist businessman visited him in his studio. Some Buddhist monks had told this businessman that he had a "third eye" and that he should give himself over to more meditation. During the visit to Lao, the businessman looked at a particular painting for a long time. He requested that the lights be dimmed while he examined the painting in semi-darkness. Finally, he exclaimed: "This painting is truly Lao." Asked if he wanted to buy the painting, he replied that he would order another one. He saw figures in the painting that no one in haste would probably notice. Asked if he intended these figures discerned by the businessman, Lao only smiled. Then he volunteered he didn't consciously intend

them but, at a certain point, he could make out figures on the canvas and he played along with them.

For Lao, this making out of forms brings back childhood memories when he vividly saw figures take shape while trying to go to sleep. As he looked up from under his mosquito net, forms and patterns became visible. What is "invisible" to some becomes visible to a few who take time to "entertain" or play with the essential.

Eloquent silence of art

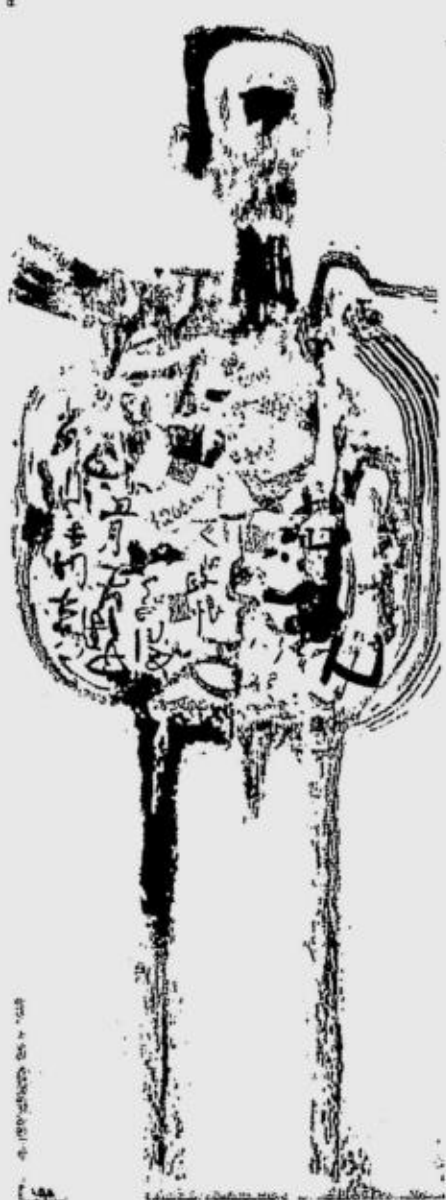
In a way, the other paintings in this exhibit that carry titles like "Man of Many Words," "Man of Few Words," and "Neurotic Zen Master," may be considered as

portraits or even Lao's self-portraits. The "Man of Many Words" contains collages of Chinese calligraphic characters inside his rotund body.

The supreme paradox is that Lao Lianben—considered rightly as the "Man of Few Words"—succeeds in becoming the "Man of Many Words" but only through the eloquent silence of his art. It is a silence worth listening to, giving much food for thought.

Lao Lianben's "Figures and a Man of Few Words" is on view at Jorge Vargas Museum, UP Diliman Campus until today.

E-mail the author at lgarcia@ateneo.edu.



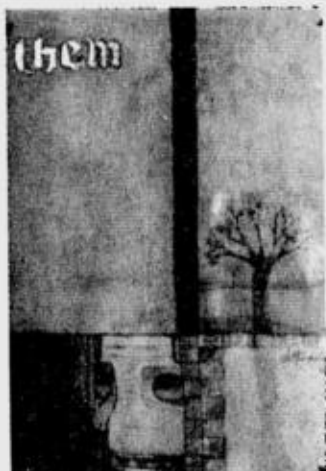
"MAN of Many Words"



"NEUROTIC Zen Master"



"FAITHCES to Faithces" 2



"FAITHCES to Faithces" 3



"FAITHCES to Faithces" 4

Faces of faith

By Ma. Jessica Jalandoni-Robillos
Contributor

TWENTY-six-year-old Farley del Rosario's exhibit at the Penguin gallery in Malate (604 Remedios Street, just off the Circle) is dubbed "Faith," not only because he says he's religious. It evidently applies to his art, in which he lets the medium flow, working from there, allowing the resulting drips and blotches to become the beginning lines or some part of his bemusing characters.

There lies the faith: The medium is his paramour, he is certain to be given what he waits for.

Del Rosario prefers mixed media, which he says allows him to explore more freely multiple avenues of creating. This is apparent in the collection because, though they are all collages, his renditions are varied.

"People Are People" is a series of square-foot boxed and glassed-in collages that seem to be portholes. They show scenes as seen by Farley from his ship adrift on the "sea of humanity," apt for the title of the series. Words cut out from magazines float about the person perhaps to take the place of thought or speech bubbles.

Watercolor is used somewhat like a cosmetic, with a clown's perfect dots of blush, curled moustache, and star light rays from the eyes are superimposed on a somber-looking man's face. A key or some kind of wind-up knob is attached to the back of his head, maybe to imply that the clown persona is one that is put on as a façade which belies his true self.

Definitely, the artist has a yen for recycling or using scrap, though his is not typical collage-making. In his "Faithces" series, he again uses magazine pages, placed beneath paper made translucent with a solution Farley keeps secret. Thus, the image in print is blurred, which invites more distortion. Here, gold paint stands out against the grays, blacks, and stark white backdrop, bringing to mind C3PO, the droid of "Star Wars" fame.

Curious faces

The images seem to be products of Dr. Frankenstein's experimentations. Others are reminiscent of, or a cross between, Tim Burton's "claymation" characters in "The Nightmare Before Christmas" and Raggedy Ann (or Andy) with stitching on their faces.

Their expressions are at once glad and sad, tired or listless, yet a perennial smile is plas-



"FAITHCES to Faithces" 1

tered (in this case, stitched) upon their pasty faces, hair extended, ending in Betty Boop curls. The cartoon details are expected, as Del Rosario dabbles in animé as well. This may explain why, despite being disjointed, they are not fearsome.

Eyes are sometimes pools of swirling lines, or slats of what seem like gold steel. Apparently, the playful approach to depicting the supposed windows of the soul may be traced to his growing up watching his mother perform her profession as an optometrist. It may also pertain to how these characters refuse to reveal too much. Or is it perhaps his visual equivalent of blind faith?

The artist calls the merged and reconstructed images as "faithces," joining two words to refer to the different faces that parlay faith.

Some of the works are outright devotional references (in one work, the word "pray" is in gold gothic italics). They imply unwavering belief.

If they looked long and close enough, viewers would be surprised to recognize likenesses to actual living individuals yearning for faith.

Penguin Gallery is open from Tuesday to Saturday, 6 p.m.-1 a.m. Call or text 0927-2176768.

E-mail jejaro2002@yahoo.com



"PEOPLE to People" 1

Essentially India

By Elizabeth Lolarga
Contributor

"ESSENTIALLY India" was how the Department of Art Theory at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts sweepingly called its sixth annual celebration of a facet of Asian culture last week.

For this festival, our Asian Art History class under Prof. Tina P. Colayco burned with ambition and unflagging stamina to do a replica of that symbol of India—not the lion capitals of Emperor Ashoka, but the Taj Mahal, Shah Jahan's monument to deathless love for Mumtaz Mahal, the favored wife who died at childbirth.

Our assignment was to build a four-meter booth with the famed bulbous or onion-shaped dome on top bracketed by two smaller domes, and enclose the structure with "marble" walls and Islamic-influenced windows.

We had barely a week to accomplish our Taj. For reference, my classmates and I turned to my dog-eared copy of the Time-Life series "Great Ages of Man," particularly the volume "Historic India." Some scoured the college library but couldn't find any more helpful visual aids.

Until now I'm amazed at the dynamics of group work. The most ebullient gay, Esteban de la Rosa, took over the helm and hied off to Divisoria to buy yards of multicolored gina cloth, cut into lengthy strips, for the ceiling of our booth.

My sometimes angry but responsible and mechanically minded classmate in other subjects, Paolo Francisco, took charge of measurements, purchasing stuff from the hardware.

Harry Luailhati, the perennial finalist or overall winner in national art contests, presided over the intricate detailing of floral motifs and arabesques over the arched entrances which our other groupmates copied.

'Stonehenge'

Professors went around checking our progress. When professor-critic



Taj Mahal booth

Ruben Defeo saw our unfinished gray minarets, he laughed, saying, "I thought they were something from Stonehenge!"

When we suggested that we turn them instead into a pair of *lingams* (the masculine principle of Hinduism), he said they would appear like dirty fingers pointed skyward.

So we dumped the idea of doing either minarets or phallic *lingams*, and Harry and his team of painters transformed the two tall towers made of bamboo and chicken wire and wrapped with cardboard into painted human figures—one of a sensual nature goddess inspired from a sculpture dated 11th-12th century, and the other a Buddhist saint still wearing the accoutrements of an earthly prince.

At close to dawn on Feb. 21, all the booths were set up with the pink Ganesha, the gigantic Hindu deity of good fortune and auspicious beginnings and dispenser of knowledge, at the entrance of the college driveway.

There were other "temples" galore, one celebrating *mithuna* or those erotically entwined couples celebrating procreation, another dedicated to

Shiva, the god of dance and destruction, and so on.

When our class took a look at the merchants who were occupying our Taj, which was situated under a droopy star-apple tree, we found the Ragnarok folks running an online computer game for a fee.

No one uttered desecration, but when I recalled how I filled up pages of my bluebook during our first major test discussing the history of the Taj and the whole romance behind it, my heart felt a twinge. Mostly it was out of exhaustion.

On second thought, the Taj Mahal as it appeared for a week on the college grounds was a symbolic continuation of an old culture combined with the realities of modern-day India which bills itself as the center of information technology.

As India's cultural attaché Shamma Jain said in her message to the Fine Arts community, particularly the 100 Art History students who reproduced Indian art: "If there's one place on earth where the dreams of man began, it was India. What sets it apart is the seamless continuity of its ancient civilization."

Understanding culture and dev't aid

FINANCIAL assistance of wealthy nations to developing countries, to be most useful, must go beyond mere economics. It must consider the dignity, rights, aspirations, and cultural character of peoples who, in being helped, are allowed to remain who they essentially are.

This is the central theme of the book, "Development Anthropology: Beyond Economics" which was recently released by New Day Publishers.

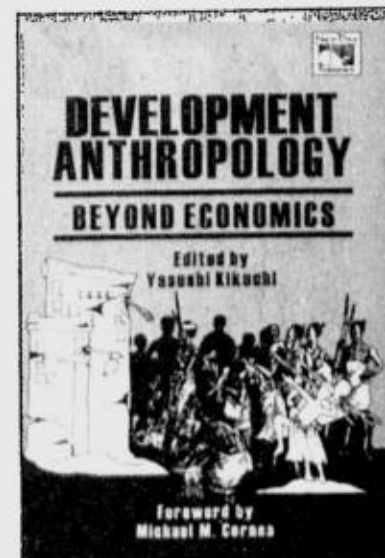
The 18-chapter, 350-page book delves into the important role played by development anthropology in the formulation of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) programs of nations. According to the book, ODAs have little chance to succeed in the long-term without an adequate understanding of the governing relationships of donor and recipient countries, especially with regards to

culture and national identity.

This is where the practice of development anthropology makes its distinct contribution: in the sensitivity to the nuances that must be factored into the design and implementation of ODA programs.

The book, a compilation of 18 essays and paper presentations from authorities in sociology, development, and international relations all over the world, which includes Dr. Wilfredo Villacorta of the Philippines. The compendium is edited by Prof. Yasushi Kikuchi of Waseda University in Japan and contains a foreword from Dr. Michael Cernea of the George Washington University in Washington DC.

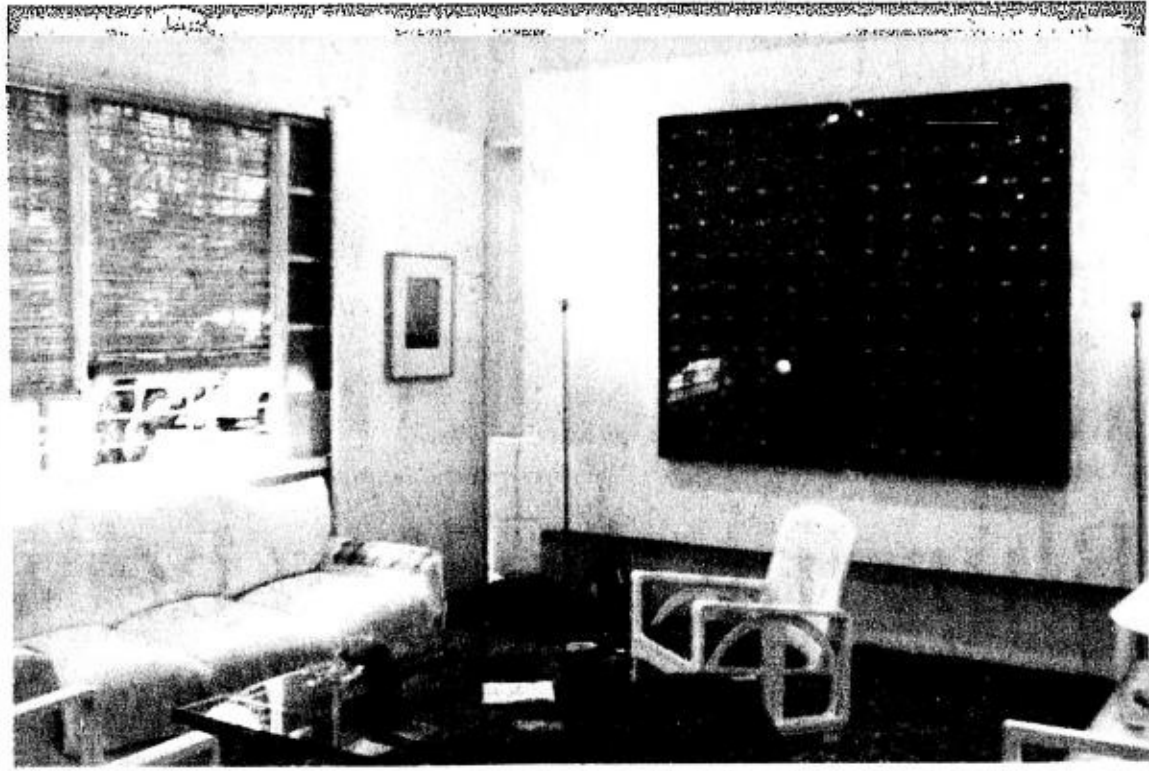
The book, a useful tool for technocrats, academicians and development policy makers, is available at leading bookstores nationwide. For



inquiries, call New Day Publishers at 928-8046 or 927-5982 or e-mail newdayorders@edsamail.com.ph.



THE OLD Pinoy house ambience superbly sets off A-11 Design Gallery's up-to-the-minute contemporary design.



Avellana Art Gallery displays major pieces of contemporary Philippine art in a residential setting.

Avellana Art Gallery sparks Pasay revival

From page C1

vision was to present contemporary art in an everyday setting without the special lighting fixtures and the sleek white walls normally associated with galleries.

Avellana Art Gallery places paintings and sculpture in a setting similar to where buyers would normally display their art, either at home or in the office. The gallery's home setting removes the mystique out of gallery exhibitions and brings art to a level easier for viewers to appreciate.

The gallery house is a 1950s gem. In its voluminous high-ceilinged space, natural light streams through the large open windows. Mature trees in the garden not only filter the air that wafts into both floors of the house, they rise above roof level to provide a cooling canopy of shade.

The garden itself is tropical splendor. Sunlight dappled by leaves and plants pattern the ground where clumps of carabao grass coexist happily with patches of well-swept bare ground. Plants grow here and there, a contrast to the highly arranged planting that today's landscape architects love to contrive.

The house and surrounding garden are tropical architecture at its best. But it is the architecture that most self-proclaimed Manila sophisticates will disregard as trendy.

Gardens had a different character then. Unlike today's garden designers who like massing plants into giant outdoor flower arrangements, yesterday's gardens shielded people from the heat of the tropical sun.

These are the traditional Pinoy gardens where plants grow under a canopy of mature hardwood trees, where patches of carabao grass struggle to grow in the dappled sunlight, and the kind of plants that *lola* used to have in her garden completed the ensemble which now touches all of my memory chords.

Avellana Art Gallery has a new neighbor. A-11 Design Gallery recently moved into an identical house across the driveway street, but the similarity ends there.

A-11 is a furniture and home accessories gallery and an interior designer's atelier as well. In contrast to the free-flowing Avellana Art Gallery across, Eric Paras' design imprint is evident in his house.

His sleek, contemporary door designs blend with the original detailing of the house. His well-ordered Pinoy-Zen inspired garden is a welcome contrast with the frayed landscaping all over the compound.

Avellana Art Gallery has sparked a movement. More designers and artists are looking into the other houses in the compound. Hopefully an art and design colony will eventually flourish at 2680 E.B. Harrison. That would give Manila another great place to hang out in.

Most of the public spaces in Manila are in such dismal condition. But then, Manila is a city that largely turns its back to public spaces, preferring the intimacy of homes, back yards, pocket parks, and other quiet areas out of public view and reach. These are places to recharge from the stress of living in this city. The Pasay compound where Avellana Art Gallery is is among those quiet urban retreats.

Maybe we should all face reality, accept

AVELLANA/C6



CRAFTSMAN furniture, ceramic art and paintings form a comfortable vignette on the stair landing of Avellana Art Gallery.

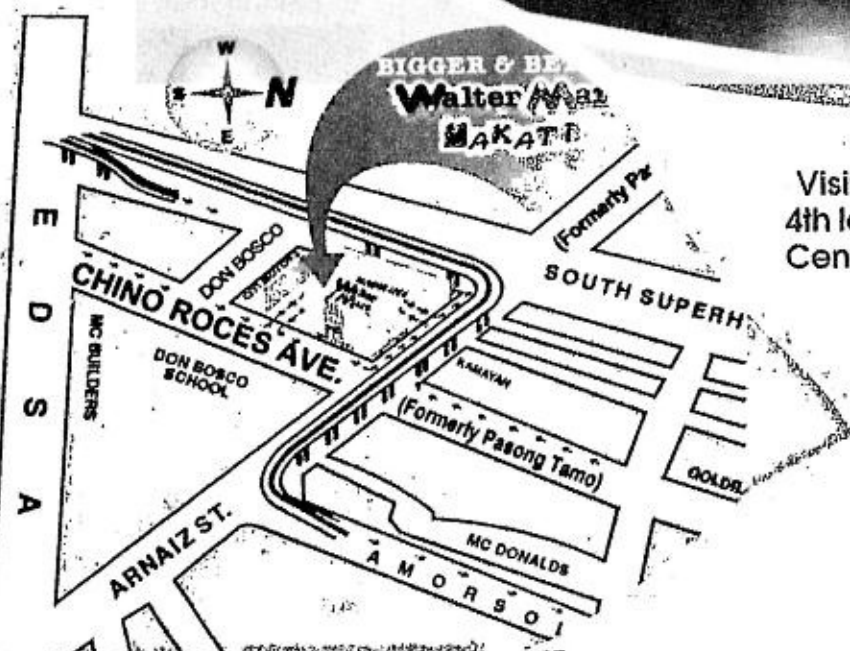
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DESIGNS Ligna bedroom tableaux enhanced by paintings from the Saturday Group

Blurring the line between art and furniture

Text by Constantino C. Tejero
Photos by Ryan Lim

PHILIPPINE art is truly abounding, and the works our artists churn out so overflow they can no longer be contained in our numerous art galleries. In one exhibit, you can literally find them in the woodwork.

We're talking of "Parallelism," until March 5 in the Designs Ligna Showroom at the Cyberzone, 4/L, Bldg. B, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

The unique exhibit was conceptualized and curated by Charissa Lopez, merchandising manager of Designs Ligna. While a number of artists have a tie-up with the firm to display their artworks in the showroom as accents for the furniture pieces, this time Lopez has blown the partnership into a full-scale art exhibit.

She had wanted to hold an exhibit in the showroom to attract clients to the finely crafted furniture and at the same time offer a venue to give exposure to the artists' works. She mentioned her concept to a former batchmate from the University of Santo Tomas College of Architecture and Fine Arts.

That batchmate happened to be Carlo Ongchangco, a member of the Saturday Group. He told his colleagues about it, and so it got rolling.

The exhibit's title could have been inspired by the parallelism of design elements that can be found in both paintings and furniture pieces—whether the curvilinear forms, minimalist aesthetic or ornate motifs echoed by the painting from the furniture or vice versa.

Also, Designs Ligna and the Saturday Group were founded in the same year, 1968, which would make both 37 years old. (The furniture firm was founded by Al and Kay de Lange. *Ligna* is Latin for "wood.")

Most of all, the Designs Ligna people consider their furniture pieces as artworks themselves. Designed by Dem Bitantes, they range from classic to traditional to contemporary.

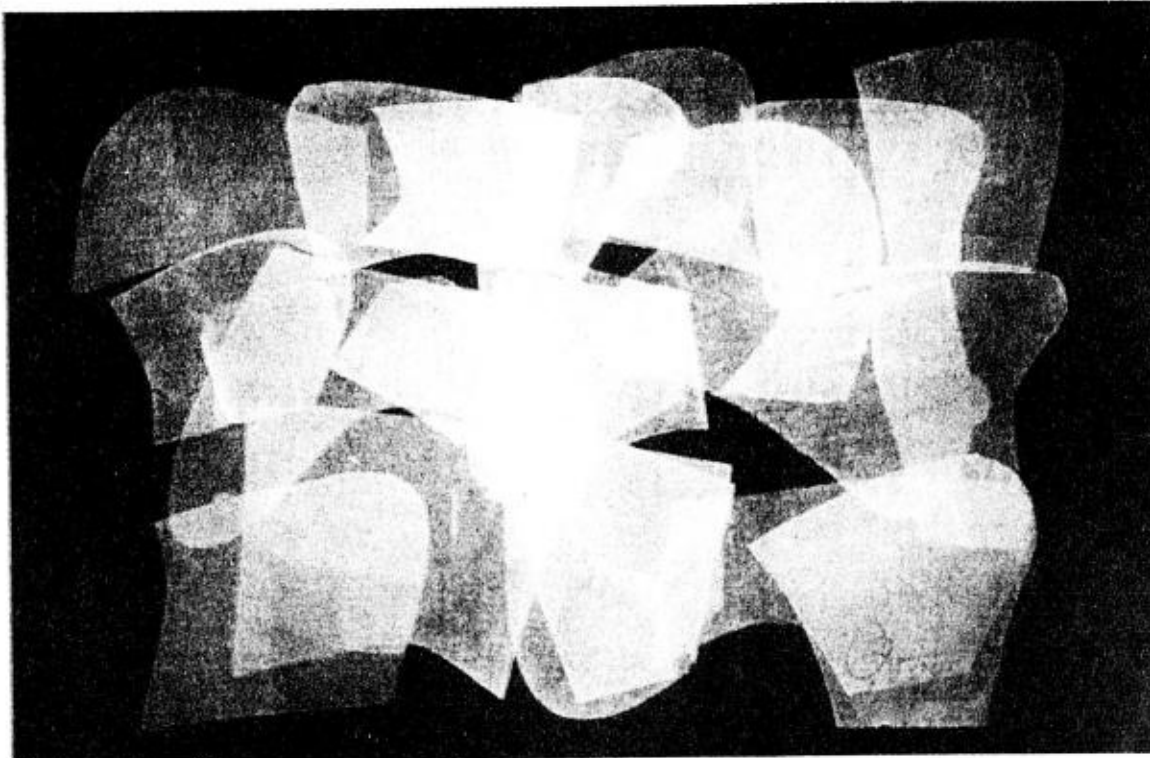
Complementary pairing

Each piece is handcrafted and made the traditional way, using dowels and glue for joinery, with the drawers of dovetailed solid wood. Only well-seasoned wood is used, which is then hand-rubbed with oil, to make each piece last a lifetime.

Some are of kiln-dried native hardwoods such as narra (rosewood), lauan or tanguile (Philippine mahogany), teakwood, accented with crushed bamboo or polished coconut shell, and set off with home décor and accessories of woven abaca strips and fabric, rattan, metalwork. But most are imported, such as cherry, oak, maple, ash wood—to help our depleted forests recover.

For the show, the painters were asked for works with themes or styles that complement the furniture. These are set in real-home tableaux in the 400-sq m showroom designed by Joey Yupangco.

At the entrance foyer is a garden setting



"DIAPHANOUS," by Romulo Olazo



"WHITE Cattleya," by Cris Cruz



LEATHER love seats in museum-like atmosphere



FLORAL still life by Cruz in dining-room setting

A craftsman secretary is echoed, brightened and loosened by Blanco's diaphanous still life in oil, "Unwind."

In the bedroom, the sensual form, incandescence and sense of motion of Lydia Velasco's dancing maiden in dishabille in the acrylic piece "Sayaw" could set on fire the plantation bed of solid ash wood accented with coconut shell and resin.

Different experience

Here, too, are Malang's small impressionist gouache landscapes in rich melting hues; Remy Boquiren's delicate varicolored floral still lifes in oil pastel; Cruz's gigantic bloom "White Cattleya"; Vitasa's butterflies; Caña's "Fusion" series; Buds Convocar's strange visions of civilization, past, future or mythical.

The viewer's experience is, of course, different from that in an art gallery, where the focus is on the artworks. Here various focal points vie for attention, since Yupangco has designed the space to give the feel of "an interesting museum."

This exhibit is for the benefit of Being Human Foundation, a nongovernment organization addressing "poverty, inequality and imbalance," and dedicated to "improving lives through the creation of self-governing enterprises." The foundation gives scholarships and helps victims of the recent South Asia tsunami and the typhoon that hit Quezon province.

Lopez says they selected it after she searched through the Internet, and was attracted by its concept of sharing resources and the benefits of progress. "They do not rely on donations. They put up self-sustaining businesses and the profits they share to charity."

She hints this show is only the beginning, as they're planning to hold regular art exhibits. "Pero iba-ibang mediums—sculptures, paintings."



SECRETAIRE with Blanco's "Unwind"

where outdoor furniture, such as an oval extension table matched with reclining high-back folding chairs, blend with Valino's watercolor piece "Diwata."

In the sala, the squares, rectangles and curves of a chaise lounge, in woven rawhide on frame of metal and ash wood, are echoed by Ongchangco's mixed-media piece "Beyond the Windowpane."

In the dining room, the severe straight lines and dark wood of a parquet table and chairs are foiled by the bright color and circular forms of Cris Cruz's watercolor piece "Vase Full of Fragrance."

In the study, the impression of fragility is enhanced when a "Diaphanous" oil painting by Romulo Olazo is set by a mandarin desk and chair inspired by the detail of the bamboo.

Avellana Art Gallery sparks Pasay revival

From page C5

what we've got, and stop wishing Manila to be the grand city of avenues and boulevards, of vast landscaped parks and broad vistas, and of glowing monuments and monumental architecture. That was Daniel Burnham's vision for the city when the American colonial government asked him to prepare a Manila plan in 1905.

The eminent American planner saw Manila as a "City Beautiful," a tropical Paris. We ignored his vision, allowed Manila to turn into the uncoordinated patchwork of ad-hoc development that exists today. So the mess that we've got is our fault and we have to live with it.

Living in Manila means that we

have to find a way for maintaining sanity in an assaulting urban environment, so it is essential to retreat to a place of calm within the city from time to time. Avellana Art Gallery is one of those retreats.

Avellana Gallery and A-11 Design Gallery are at 2680 F.B. Harrison St. (in front of Gideon Academy between Libertad and Edsa), Pasay. Call Avellana Art Gallery at 833 8357, and A-11 Design Gallery at 832 9972.

Heritage watch: FEU

Congratulations to the Far Eastern University, building owners and businessmen on Nicanor Reyes (Morayta) Street who recently organized themselves into a Property Owners and

Businessmen's Association. They intend to take active charge of policing, upgrading and managing their street and neighborhood.

On the FEU campus is Manila's most extensive group of Art Deco buildings. The university began a campus renaissance with its recent restoration of five major heritage structures (built 1939-50), re-fitting them with the latest educational facilities.

The FEU renaissance inspired its neighbors on Nicanor Reyes Street. Wanting to improve their surroundings, neighbors voluntarily cleaned the sidewalk fronting their establishments, then repaired buildings and painted facades.

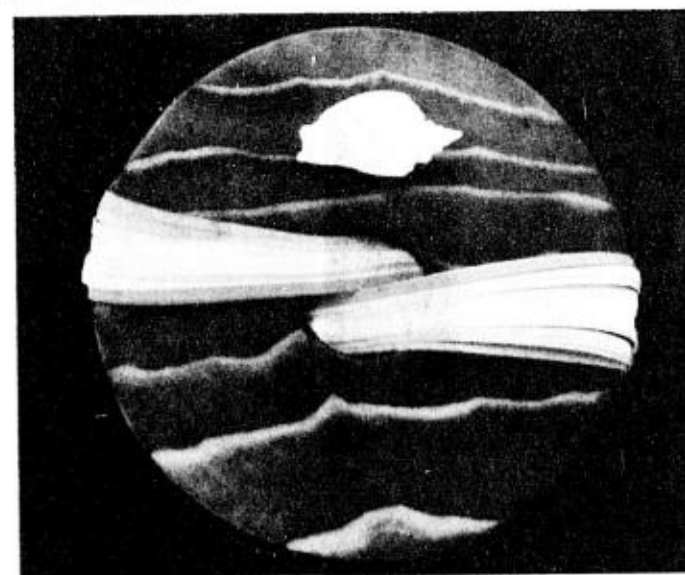
Seeing their modest accomplishment, the City of Manila supported the neighborhood initiative by repaving the street and sidewalks, fixing drainage, installing new lighting, and organizing the University Belt Redevelopment Project to provide city support for future upgrading projects in the Nicanor Reyes Street neighborhood.

The FEU-led Nicanor Reyes Street revitalization sets a national precedent, a first in the country where heritage catalyzed concerned citizens to organize private-public cooperation for improving their degraded urban area. It demonstrates that heritage is a powerful generator for urban revitalization.

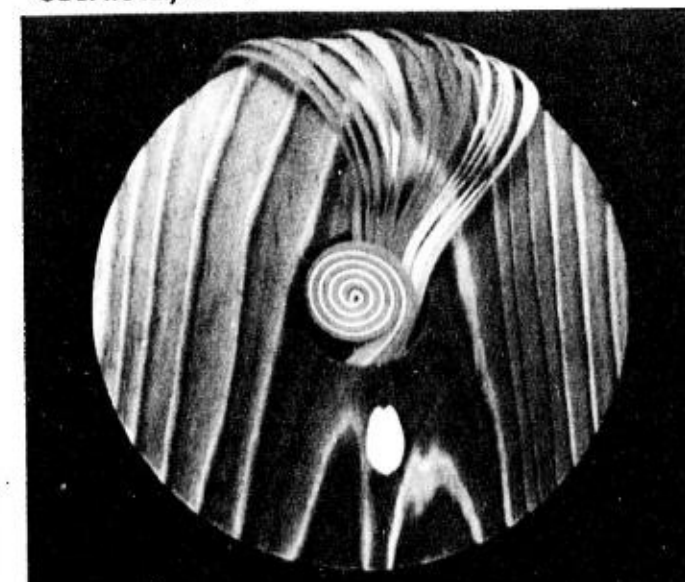
E-mail feedback to avillalon@hotmail.com



TRADITIONAL Filipino landscaping provides the coolness and shade so essential in the tropics, a far cry from the landscapes of plants composed like flower arrangements "designed" by today's landscape architects.



"COSMIC Rhythm" 6



"COSMIC Rhythm" 2

IMPY PILAPIL'S 'COSMIC RHYTHMS'

"Cosmic Rhythms," a show of recent works by Impy Pilapil, is running at the new space in Avellana Gallery until March 5. Pilapil's fascination in exploring materials as medium for her art is evident in this collection. The exhibit features mixed-media assemblages of found objects like wood, paper and marine elements in small format. Avellana Gallery is located at 2680 F.B. Harrison St., Pasay City. Call 8338357.

Chalk art festival at UST today



CHALK art making at UST's Benavides Park

TO END its month-long celebration of the National Arts Month, the University of Santo Tomas will hold the third annual Thomasian Chalk Festival (TCF) today at the university grounds 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Organized by the UST Museum of Arts and Sciences, TCF is the only inter-school on-the-spot chalk art competition in the country. It is open to all college students in Metro Manila, enrolled for the current academic year.

The contestants are expected to create artworks using only colored chalks as medium on a ground area measuring 7 ft x 7 ft.

This year's theme is "Revolution Now!" Contestants must depict the active role of the youth in the evolu-

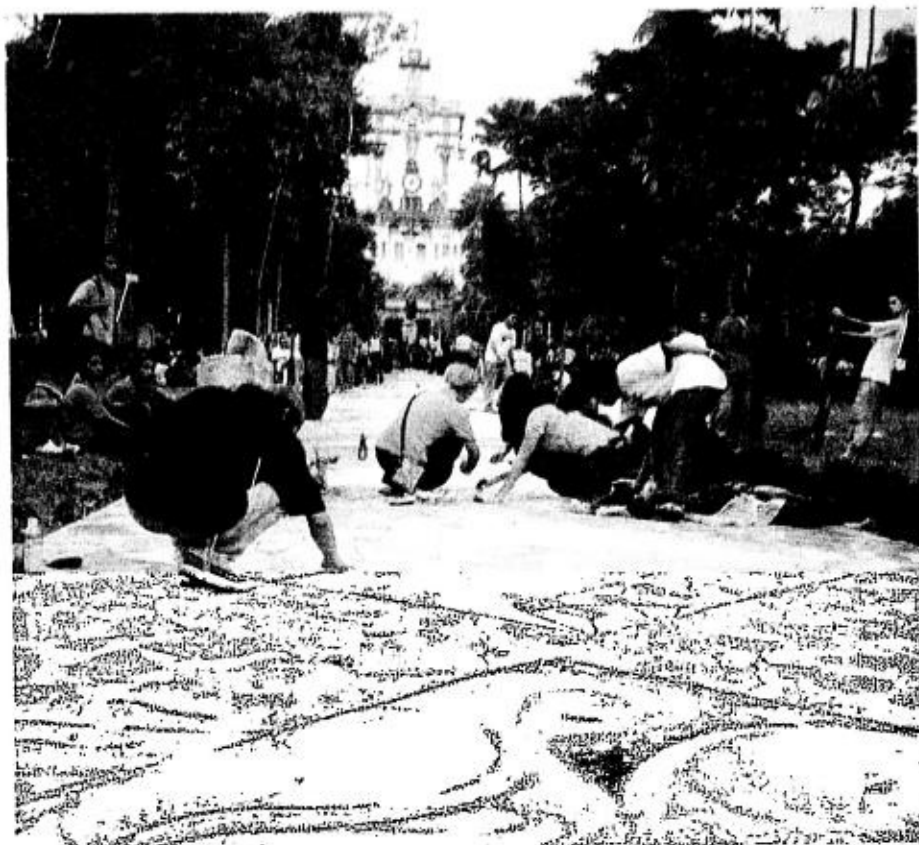
tion not just of Philippine art but also of Filipino identity.

Cash prizes are P30,000 (first place); P20,000 (second place); and P15,000 (third place).

During the festival, student bands from various schools will perform. There will also be poetry reading sessions by the Thomasian Writers Guild.

The TCF is patterned after the chalk festivals in Europe, where the art of street painting has long been a tradition. The philosophy of chalk art is based on the concept that people are drawn to the ephemeral nature of the art form, which lends a certain vision and purpose to the activity. The temporality of the artwork focuses the viewer on the importance of the creative process rather than the finished product.

Call Jocelyn D. Tullao, TCF project director, at 7811815 or 7409718.



PASOO and ABBOTT join forces for anti-obesity campaign

Abbott Laboratories continues to actively engage in efforts advocating an obesity-free society following the successful launch of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Reduce Weight program.

The Philippine Association on the Study of Overweight and Obesity (PASOO), in cooperation with Abbott Laboratories, will support a conference that centers on an advocacy to counter obesity on February 28, 2005 at the Westin Philippine Plaza. The press conference will address the issue of obesity as a medical condition. It will be graced by two notable personalities - Professor Luc Van Gaal of the Department of Diabetology and Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism, University Hospital of Antwerp, and Dr. Augusto D. Litonjua, founding president of Philippine Association on the Study of Overweight and Obesity (PASOO).

"Terror in our midst" is how Dr. Litonjua, calls obesity. Despite the prevalence of obesity in the country, this disease remains to have little priority in the healthcare industry. Obesity brings with it a range of illnesses particularly cardiovascular disorder, once so uncommon in the Philippines, and now ranking as an important cause of mortality.

PASOO has engaged in a number of studies with the aim of addressing this growing global problem. One such project looked into the prevalence of obesity in medical practice wherein 164 randomly selected general practitioners nationwide participated. The study, which extended from April 1996 to December 1998, showed that the prevalence of obesity in medical practice in the Philippines is 21%, while 25% of consulting patients are overweight.

"PASOO has started this nationwide project to create awareness on the importance of this medical condition," says Dr. Litonjua. "This is because unlike communicable diseases with their immediate symptoms, obesity has crept up almost unnoticed. At this point, halting and reversing the upward trend of the obesity epidemic will require effective collaboration among government, private sectors, and non-governmental groups, with a strong commitment to action by individuals and communities across the nation."

A local study done by Linda S. Adair of the Department of Nutrition from the University of Carolina noted a dramatic rise in overweight and obesity in adult Filipino women and the risk of hypertension. The result revealed that the prevalence of overweight and obesity combined, increased nearly 6-fold from 6% in 1983 to 1984 to 35% in 1998 to 1999. It was also noted that weight gain was positively associated with urban residence, improved socio-economic status, fewer pregnancies and months of lactation, and more away-from-home work hours.

"Globally, obesity affects 7% of the world's adult population", says Prof. Van Gaal. "There are 1 billion overweight adults, 300 million of whom are clinically obese. This condition has been noted to affect the Filipino people."

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LIFESTYLE

Power to the powerless

By Gibbs Cadiz

TANGHALANG Pilipino's "Mass," Rody Vera's stage adaptation of National Artist for Literature F. Sionil Jose's last installment to his five-novel Rosales saga, is at once powerful and frustrating, mythic and opaque.

In this inventive but not particularly illuminating production directed by Chris Millado, Jose's darkly panoramic vision of Philippine society in the grips of never-ending violence and betrayal is pared down to a rather straightforward exposition of the adventures and political awakening of the novel's hero, Pepe Samson.

Samson (played by Yul Servo) comes to Manila in search of answers to his bastard ori-

Tanghalang Pilipino's 'Mass' is a provocative if opaque look at the corruptibility of the Filipino soul

gins. He is the son of Antonio Samson, the hero in the preceding novel, "The Pretenders." A reluctant ilustrado, Tony Samson would write a galvanizing screed against the excesses of his social class before committing suicide by throwing himself in the path of an oncoming train.

In Samson's son Pepe, now struggling to survive in the stinky underbelly of the city, Jose continues his caustic dissection of the corrupt-

POWER/D2

YUL Servo, Diana Malahay and Mads Nicolas in "Mass," Rody Vera's stage adaptation of National Artist for Literature F. Sionil Jose's novel

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British Council marks 25th year in RP



UK comedienne Linda Marlowe

THE BRITISH Council celebrates its 25th year in the Philippines as an agency dedicated to enhancing educational and cultural ties between the UK and the Philippines on a "people-to-people" basis.

This year, the Council has prepared an outstanding line-up of events designed to give better access to skills and experiences which can shape the future of young people, and create lasting memories of a welcoming, multi-cultural and creative UK. Among these activities are the following:

"Hinabi: Woven Innovations" is an exhibition running until March 16 at the Product Design Center of the Philippines, which features the works of textile designer Rebecca Von Gyer and weaving cooperatives throughout the country.

The project comprised the third phase of the British Council's design residency program with the Centre for International Trade Expositions and Missions, and is now meant to inspire small- and medium-scale enterprises with new and exciting possibilities.

For its theater season, the British Council has teamed up with the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Arts Council of Cebu, Silliman University, Bronnley of London, and Crossover 105.1 to present UK comedienne Linda Marlowe in a powerful one-woman comedy based on her own life, called "No Fear."

It will run at the Marcelo B. Fernan Press Center-Cebu (March 1), Luce Auditorium-Dumaguete (March 3) and Cultural Center of the Philippines Little Theatre (March 5).

From March 5-26, the Shangri-La Plaza Mall marks Philippine-British Arts Month with a lineup of events under the campaign slogan "UK-OK!"

For starters, Streetscape blares "Britannia Rocks!" every Saturday evening. John Lesaca leads John Y Cash & The Jukebox with nostalgic hits on March 5. Judith Banal does vocals for Evolution with '80s hits on March 12. Funky band Retrospect then closes with the best of New Wave on March 19.

March 14 marks the opening of "25 in 2005," a photo and memorabilia exhibit at The Shang's ground floor lobby, showcasing highlights of the British Council's engagement with Filipinos through the years.

'Bunso'

Following the cocktail reception that evening will be an invitational screening of Chevening scholar Ditsi Carolino's award-winning documentary on juvenile justice, "Bunso," at the Shang Cineplex.

Ewan McGregor, Adrien Brody and Keira Knightley lead a stellar film twinbill when the animated movie "Robots" and John Maybury's five-star thriller "The Jacket" open at the Shang Cineplex on March 16 and 26, respectively.

On March 19, Cardiff World Pool Championship veterans led by Lee Van Corteza, Warren Kiamco, Ramil Gallego, Dennis Orcollo and Antonio Lining headline "On Cue!"—a billiards and snooker exhibition at the Shang's youth zone, jointly presented by Puy-at Sports.

In the afternoon, British Council Philippines renews its support for Candid Records, which will welcome into its roster of artists Manila's jazz superband, Affinity, composed of top instrumentalists Tots Tolentino, Ehlmir Saison, Koko Bermejo, Simon Tan and Johnny Alegre.

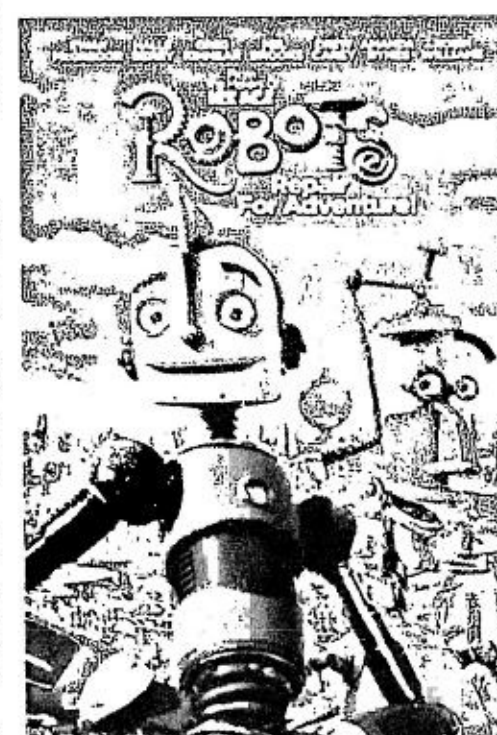
On April 3, the British Council's award-winning radio program, "The Selector," begins airing in Manila, Cebu, Iloilo and Davao over NU107, courtesy of Aural Communications. The weekly show will bring the latest in pop music from the UK, and will feature live performances, interviews and other innovative seg-



TOP Scottish band Franz Ferdinand



ILIGAN-BORN Gian Romano, Mega Young Designers Competition winner in 2004, with models



"ROBOTS"

ments.

To officially launch the show in May, top Scottish band Franz Ferdinand has been invited to play in what is planned as the biggest youth party in Manila—"Union Jack Flash."

On May 8, British Council and the Samba-Likhaan Foundation present "Mummy Dearest." Young musicians from all over the country will form a specially assembled youth orchestra to cap their four-year music education se-

ries under the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with a special concert on Mother's Day.

From May 16-27, Maxine Baker, screenwriter and director at the National Film and Television School in Beaconsfield, will conduct a documentary filmmaking workshop at the Sonolux Studios under the auspices of the Jesuit Communications office.

On July 15, Iligan-born Gian Romano, Mega Young Designers Competition winner in 2004, shows off the results of his training at Central St Martins with a 40-piece collection called "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

The fashion show will be held back-to-back with a static exhibition of designs by Aklanon Lesley Mobo, now senior designer at Harrods. Music and audio-visual enhancement will be provided by Addictive TV, top VJs from the UK, as presented by Natural-Born Klubbers.

Filipino winners of "I'm Asian, But," the Digital Film Competition launched by British Council offices in East Asia, will be showcased at a week-long festival all over the country from Aug. 10-16. Top finalists from the region will be sent to the UK as entries for the ICA Short Film Festival in January.

There will also be a bigger and stronger festival of contemporary European filmmaking via the nationwide run of Cine Europa.

Stage

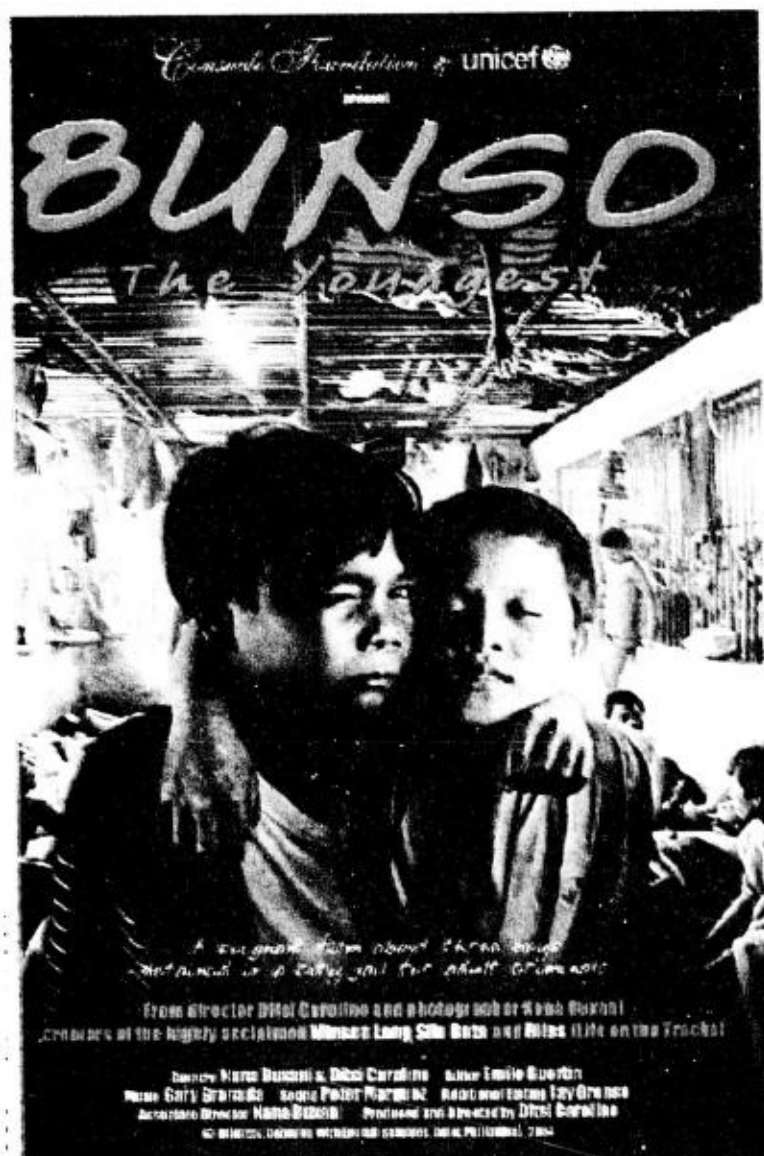
Throughout September, the British Council teams up with member companies of Philstage in presenting a month-long Shakespeare festival bannered by Theatre Babel of Scotland doing "Macbeth" at CCP Little Theatre on Sept. 14-15.

Participating companies include Repertory Philippines, which will mount an all-male production of "Taming of the Shrew," Tanghalang Pilipino with its version of "Romeo and Juliet," Actor's Actors Inc with "Richard III," and Philippine Playhouse with a musical version of "Hamlet."

To enhance its English teaching initiatives, the British Council will also sponsor a touring production called "What's The Fuss About Shakespeare?" starring classical actors Paul Holme and Jim Paolelli. A speech competition for high school and college students will also be conducted with the grand finals on Sept. 18.

Finally, on Nov. 18-19, the British Council leads other member-states of the European Union and the Commonwealth in mounting the Global Education Fair, designed to give Filipino students more options for study opportunities overseas.

Call 9141011-14 or visit www.britishcouncil.org.ph



"BUNSO," Ditsi Carolino's award-winning documentary

Power to the powerless

ibility of the Filipino soul.

The younger Samson becomes, successively, a "toro" performer, a drug pusher and a murderer before finding the light. Along the way, he also becomes a writer, a playboy, a student activist—while under constant torment over his unacknowledged ties with his father.

This Freudian vein assumes an all-important part in the play, as Millado uses it to anchor Pepe's stark descent into prodigality and rot. The young man from the sleepy town of Cagugawan has found an excuse to go wild—he has issues with dad, who, while already dead, still casts a shadow over him.

The psychologizing is expected, and perhaps appropriate given the play's early-'70s milieu. But it must be said that such self-destructive angst now seems more quaint than shocking in our permissive, tell-all times, when bastard starlets regularly pop out on TV to wax boo-hoo in public and claim their 15 minutes of fame.

What this amounts to is much ado about nothing, and the play's emotional core isn't as compelling as it should be.

Episodic

The start of "Mass" sees Pepe on a revolving spot on stage, turning round and round and howling out

his various incarnations—"pusher," "mamamatay-ao," "torero" and, of course, "bastardo."

But once it gets on its way, the play turns out to be an episodic, point-by-point exposition of these chapters in Pepe's life. Each new layer is assumed and discarded—sloughed off is the right word—like a ratty piece of clothing, with Pepe looking none the worse for wear.

Perhaps it has to do with the novel's sprawling structure—a tough case to adapt to theater, admittedly. In any case, Millado ingeniously employs various techniques to collapse time and compress the storyline—a montage of interacting dialogues, for instance, or a change of lighting and speech pattern to visualize a character's thoughts.

These dramatic shorthands are impressively staged and are obviously the product of much thoughtful design. But as plodding links in a chain leading to Pepe's moment of truth, they fail to "lift" the play. The material, as staged, refuses to rise and engage us in the gut, despite the volatile social and emotional traffic in the characters' lives.

Servo as Pepe is a hardworking actor, and he imbues the role with disarming charm. His rough-hewn vocal inflections make up for an in-



DIRECTOR Chris Millado

trinsically filmic, minimalist style of acting. But the intelligence that animates his skills is more native and intuitive, which deprives his character of the cunning and calculation it requires.

He is supposed to be editor in chief of his organization's paper, but he betrays no sense of academic or writerly introspection ever. His harrowing experience as a drug dealer and sex worker doesn't seem to deepen him, either. Right up to the end, he remains a perky, if opportunistic, interloper.

So when he takes up arms, raises the red flag and presumably heads to the hills in the end, we are left to wonder: Given his chameleon-like past, how deep

From page D1

will he go into this, the latest chapter in his overstuffed life? Will the revolution he now embraces be just another pit stop on an eternal quest for identity and self-actualization? How long, really, before he goes off on yet another adventure?

Dispiriting

The rootless search for meaning and identity may be true in real life, but it is a pretty dispiriting conclusion to a play that makes Pepe Samson's almost-superhuman character the mythic embodiment of the common Filipino's hunger for justice and uplift.

Or perhaps that is precisely Jose's point? That someone like Pepe, alive now with so much power and sense of righteousness, could also end up like his father someday, purchased and castrated by the aristocracy he so despised?

If there is anything that gives "Mass" its potency despite its prosaic execution, it is Jose's unwavering, unalterable voice at the heart of the play.

It's a conscience that bravely cries "J'accuse" at the country's mendacious, grasping elite, the ilustrado class that has betrayed the nation time and again by collaborating with invaders and oppressing their countrymen at every turn.

"Ang kasaysayan natin ay



SERVO with Lou Veloso

kasaysayan ng mga bigong rebolusyon (Our history is a history of failed revolutions.)" Pepe tells Toto, his friend and fellow activist.

Later on, he calls the Philippines "bayan ng mga traydor (a land of traitors)," citing the inglorious deaths of Antonio Luna, Gregorio del Pilar and Andres Bonifacio, among others, at the hands of their countrymen. Jose lays the blame for this moral filth squarely on the controlling oligarchy.

"Moral clarity" is a loaded phrase these days, with America's right-wing leadership having appropriated it in its global war on terror. But in "Mass," moral clarity is what Jose exhibits in his ringing denunciation of the depredations of the country's ruling class.

That could explain why he is a

polarizing figure in Philippine literature. In a nation with perpetual soft-focus memory and vision, Jose's temerity to call a spade a damn spade is deemed dangerous, even incendiary. Yet works like "Mass" shows that speaking truth to power has never been as necessary.

"Mass" offers a great supporting cast in Lou Veloso, Mads Nicolas and Ronnie Lazaro. But see it for its truth—for what it says, not so much for how it says it.

"Mass" runs until March 6 at the CCP's Tanghalang Huseng Batute. Call 8323661 or 8321125 locals 1620/1621.

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquire.com.ph



JOEL Trinidad



NICCOLO Manahan



RALION Alonso

'Little Shop of Horrors' at Rep

REPERTORY Philippines' third offering for its current season is the musical "Little Shop of Horrors," a favorite of theatergoers.

"Little Shop of Horrors" features the music of Alan Menken, with book and lyrics by Howard Ashman, and is based on a film by Roger Corman (with screenplay by Charles Griffith). It's about a voracious, man-eating plant named Audrey II, its nerdy caretaker named Seymour.

Director Baby Barredo has gathered strong voices and veteran actors for this unusual musical comedy. Playing the nerdy Seymour are Niccolo Manahan and Joel Trinidad. Ana Bitong and Liesl Batucan play Audrey, Seymour's true love.

Robbie Guevara is his grumpy boss, and Ralion Alonso and Jeremy Domin-

go play the diabolical dentist. Raul Montesa and Meynard Peñalosa are the deep-voiced plant and Marisse Borlaza, Myrene Hernandez and Ampy Sietereales the kibitzing Supremes-like trio that serves as the Greek chorus to the story.

Arnel Carrion and Franz Imperial are the physical manifestations of puppet (and set) designer Johann Quisumbing's creation.

Supporting Barredo are Marijke Amador as assistant director, Jaime Del Prado as choreographer, Edgar San Diego as costume designer, and Ariez Capistrano who assisted Mr. Quisumbing in the building of Audrey II.

Gidget Tolentino and Martin Esteva are responsible for sound and light design. Set execution is by Ben Zacarias and the scenic artist is Adolfo Lasin. A live

band conducted by Jojo Malferrari will provide the musical accompaniment.

"Little Shop of Horrors" is made possible through the support of the City of Makati, Globe Telecom, the Ayala Cinemas, McDonalds and Avon.

Rep's Gold subscribers and other special guests are invited to the opening night cocktails at the Expo Exchange in Greenbelt I (just across the hall from the theater) on March 4, 7 p.m.

The show runs until April 3. Evening shows are at 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays with 3:30 p.m. matinees on Saturdays and Sundays.

Special discounts on selected dates are available as well as discounts on group sales.

Call 8870710 or visit the REP office at C2-A Bldg. C, Karring Plaza, 2316 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City.



TRINIDAD as Seymour with the man-eating plant, Audrey II, and the three chorus girls (Myrene Hernandez, Marisse Borlaza and Ampy Sietereales)

Copi's 'Eva Peron' makes RP debut



THE CAST of "Eva Peron"

ALLIANCE Française de Manille is presenting the Dramatis Personae production of "Eva Peron," a play by Argentine playwright and cartoonist Copi, at the Carlos P. Romulo Theatre, RCBC Plaza, Makati on March 2, 8 p.m.

Originally written in French, this politically-charged satire has played around the world since 1969. Raúl Damente, better known as Copi, shows his utter disdain for Evita Peron through this cutting-edge, avant garde theatre piece written while he was living in exile in Paris during the Peron dictatorship.

Dramatis Personae's Lito Casaje directs the first Philippine run of "Eva Peron," featuring seasoned actors Dingdong Rosales, Daniel Robert Magisa, Alfonso Deza, Gio Respal and Linda Lupton.

All actors will wear specially designed costumes by Frederick Peralta and jewelry by French designer Muriel Biraghi.

The Alliance Française de Manille is one of the country's most active movers in cultural affairs and exchange. Its language school provides French lessons all year round, using the latest teaching methods and facilities.

"Eva Peron" is open to the public on a first-come-first-seated basis. A special staging of the play's Filipino version, translated by Casaje, will be held at the Puerto Real garden, Intramuros, Manila on Friday, March 18, 8 p.m.

Call 8957441/8957585 or e-mail cultural@alliance.ph.



DANIEL Robert Magisa



ALFONZO Deza



GIO Respal



DINGDONG Rosales

Assumption theater's summer workshop

THE MARIE Eugenie Theater of the Assumption will be holding a summer workshop at Assumption College, San Lorenzo Village, Makati City, from April 11 to May 6.

Children, teens and adults are invited to join the workshop to learn arts and crafts, gift wrapping, writing, tae kwon do, dance, theater and music. It's a productive and fun way to spend summer.

Call Vinda Vargas at 8401377 or Bing Millevo at 8942681. Or sign up at Assumption College's Gate 6 daily between 2:30-3:30 p.m.

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"FRIENDS" was one of the hottest situation comedies in TV history, and its end was mourned by fans all over world.

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'The Blue Room' is red-hot

By Gibbs Cadiz

THE MOST prominent elements in the otherwise minimalist stage design of New Voice Company's latest production, "The Blue Room," are the wan bouquets of flowers suspended downwards from the ceiling, looking like oversized frozen raindrops in autumnal colors of faded green and purple.

Call it a heavy-handed symbolism, but in the context of "The Blue Room," David Hare's adaptation of the 1920s Arthur Schnitzler literary perennial, "La Ronde," the hanging bouquets make a piquant statement—an apt visual metaphor for a work that sees love as a state suspended between heaven and earth, the sacred and the carnal, the hellish and the sublime.

Hare's adaptation uses the bare bones of Schnitzler's play—10 interlocking stories forming a daisy chain of ruminations on sex, love and relationships among people of various social classes—and peoples it with contemporary London characters.

Thus, Schnitzler's original Vienna archetypes like the count, the chambermaid and the soldier have become, in Hare's version, an aristocrat, an au pair and a cab driver, respectively.

These characters—plus others like a

young upper-class student, a rich matron, a politician, a coke-snorting model, an imperious actress, a hooker and a pretentious playwright—go through a frenetic roundelay of chummy talk and clumsy sex in search of love, or what passes for it in their world.

In "The Blue Room," these characters are played by only two actors, a man and a woman. For all its earnest exploration of the state of human connection, then, the play is most immediately a vehicle for tour de force versatility and craft. To shift from one character to the next, the actors undress onstage, literally shedding off one identity and assuming another.

Nudity and carnality

When Sam Mendes first staged "The Blue Room" at the Donmar Warehouse in London, he caused a tizzy by casting Nicole Kidman as one of the two main performers, opposite Iain Glen.

The play featured scenes of nudity and carnality, and the sight of Kidman undressed was enough to throw the theater world on fire. As one critic put it, Kidman in "The Blue Room" was "sheer theatrical Viagra."

In the local version that's being staged at the Republic of Malate, Jamie Wilson and Jenny Jamora play the shape-shift-

The New Voice Company's production of David Hare's play represents an erotically charged night at the theater

ing pair, and if their displays of flesh are comparatively tamer (accounts of "The Blue Room's" Australian production took note of the extensive, prolonged nudity of its stars, which isn't the case here), they bring as much emotional nakedness and abandon to their characters as the play warrants.

Wilson, in particular, shines in a couple of vignettes—as the young, naive student barely making it with an older woman, and as a playwright given to narcissistic fits of clever if meaningless wordplay.

In the latter episode, he throws caution to the wind and does the full monty. The scene is dimly lit, but it is breathtaking nonetheless, because it illustrates graphically the divide between appear-



JENNY Jamora



JAMIE Wilson and Jamora

ance and reality. The two characters—the playwright and the actress—are totally naked, yet in their contrived, unrevealing banter they remain closed off to each other.

Jamora, an excellent presence in past NVC productions, has the difficult task of navigating emotionally inhibited characters like the rich matron and the hooker, women who have learned to keep their motivations in check to survive hard lives. But she manages to lace humor and genuine ache into these bruised figures.

Indistinct dialogue

In a discretely structured drama like this, some vignettes don't work as well as the others. Parts of the dialogue also come out indistinct—a result of the actors rushing their lines and the venue's diffuse acoustics. It's a mortal sin in a

play that derives gravity from the way the characters use words to puncture and peel off each other's defenses.

Still, "The Blue Room," directed by 23-year-old Rabbi Ganaban, generates enough heat and acidity to keep itself from lapsing into long-windedness.

The sex the characters casually engage in may come quick and cheap, but their revelatory flirtations represent an erotically charged, diverting night at the theater. "The Blue Room" has substance to go with its flashes of flesh.

"The Blue Room" runs until March 5 at the Republic of Malate. Call 8966695/8965497/8990630/8919999 or e-mail nvc@pacific.net.ph

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph



THE CHORUS of Isang Buhay sa Tambakan

Student theater presents two Tinio classics

IN celebration of the National Arts Month, Dulaang Sipat Lawin, the Philippine High School for the Arts' (PHSA) resident student theater company, will hold its grand recital entitled "Tinio."

A tribute to the works, contributions and influences of National Artist for Theater and Literature Rolando Tinio, the production presents two of Tinio's classic plays: "May Katwiran Ang Katwiran" and "Isang Buhay Sa Tambakan."

"Tinio" is directed by Soli-

man Cruz and Jason Vitorillo, with production design by Otto Hernandez and lights design by Dennis Marasigan.

Dulaang Sipat Lawin will perform the play today, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m., at the Tanghalang Maria Makiling, National Arts Center, Mt. Makiling, Los Banos, Laguna; and on March 10 and 11 at the Tanghalang Huseng Batute, Cultural Center of the Philippines, with 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. shows.

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FEU launches a harvest of green and gold

WHAT do Gemino H. Abad, Alejandro R. Roces, and Azucena Grajo Urraza have in common?

Aside from being fiction writers, they have all touched base with Far Eastern University: Abad finished elementary school at FEU, Roces his MA, and Urraza her AB Journalism and MA English.

A new anthology of short stories, "A Harvest of Green and Gold," recently launched during FEU's 77th Founding Anniversary with the support of the FEU Alumni Foundation, reveals the school's many remarkable literary connections.

Edited by Elmer A. Ordoñez, himself a former high school student of FEU, the 430-page anthology showcases the stories of 38 writers, including National Artists Jose Garcia Villa, Francisco Arcellana, Nick Joaquin, F. Sionil

Jose, and Hernando R. Ocampo.

The other "Tamaraw" writers are Kerima Polotan, Tita Lacambra-Ayala, Lina Espina-Moore, Gregorio C. Brillantes, Ines Taccad Cammayo, Vicente Rivera Jr., Jose A. Quirino, B.S. Medina, Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo, Celso Al. Carunungan, Lourdes Montinola, Jesus Q. Cruz, Jaime An Lim, Ruben F. Balane, Rene Q. Bas, Agustin L. Benitez, Manuel E. Buenafe, Jose M. Buhain, Isabelo T. Crisostomo, Benjamin G. Defensor, D. Paulo Dizon, Eva Maria San Jose, Marcelino A. Foronda Jr., Delfin Fresnosa, Josefina Muñoz-Alvencia, Clemente M. Roxas, Manuela Perez Samson, Maria Dalisay D. Tongko, and Ramon Villasanta Jr.

Copies of the book are available, at P500 each, from Far Eastern University Research Center. Call 735-0038 or mtinio@feu.edu.ph.

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TAIPEI CONCERT

Lordly scorer
of 'Lord of the Rings'

HOWARD Shore

By Nancy T. Lu
Contributor

THE NAME Howard Shore came up for recognition in two categories at the latest Grammy Awards: Best Score Soundtrack Album for a Motion Picture for "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King," and Best Song Written for a Motion Picture for "Into the West," track from "The Return of the King."

When Shore, the Academy Award-winning Canadian composer of the music for the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, was writing the score, he found the J.R.R. Tolkien classic "very inspiring."

The winner of an Oscar for Best Original music elaborated during his Taipei visit in 2003, "I had the book on my desk all the time. As I was writing a theme, I read it over and over again. I kept an old copy of the book in front of me and I carried it around for three years."

But to this musician's knowledge, some people have read the classic every year for 50 years. According to him, Tolkien took 14 years to write the classic fantasy trilogy.

LORDLY/E2

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The Grammy award winner took three years to write some 40 thematic pieces for 'LOTR'

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Lordly scorer of 'Lord of the Rings'

From page E1



SHORE with "Lord of the Rings" director Peter Jackson

Peter Jackson, the director of the trilogy, looked all over the world for a collaborator in the music area for his big movie project. When he found Shore, the Toronto-born but New York-based composer had already written music for 60 films, including "The Fly," "Big," "Mrs. Doubtfire," "Silence of the Lamb," and "Ed Wood." At that time, the former sax player of a rock group called Lighthouse was known for his early and long collaboration with David Cronenberg.

The 57-year-old Shore revealed that he worked on the complex music consisting of 30-40 thematic pieces for "Lord of the Rings" for three years. He spent only a few months writing music for other movie projects.

Of filmmaker Jackson, he said: "We worked very closely together on the music. We did it theme by theme. He was with me in the recording studio. He was incredibly helpful. We struck up a good friendship."

Shore presented the "Lord of the Rings" Symphony in Taipei a few days before the Taiwan premiere of "The Return of the King" in December 2003.

Multi-media

The multi-media concert, heard and seen only in New Zealand before Taiwan, put more than 200 per-

sons—including lyric soprano Jenny Wollerman; mezzo-soprano Sarah McOnie; a boy soprano from New Zealand; 100 musicians of the National Symphony Orchestra in Taipei; the 100-voice National Experimental Chorus; and the 30-member Kuting Elementary School Chorus—on the stage at the Taipei International Convention Center.

John Mauceri, a name associated with musicals as well as pop and modern music, conducted the symphony in Taipei. He performs regularly at the Hollywood Bowl.

The spectacular production of the Columbia Artists Management Inc. featured 100 illustrated images from the three-part "Lord of the Rings," namely "The Fellowship of the Ring," "The Two Towers" and "The Return of the King."

The symphony with six movements, not to be mistaken for the soundtrack of the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, saw Shore bring together with creativity some elements of the opera, symphony, choral music and even folk music.

In trying to realize world music, Shore visited Taipei before the world premiere of the symphony. He wanted to explore the possibility of including traditional Chinese musical instruments during the Taiwan pre-

miere of his symphony.

"He decided during his visit that he wanted three taiko drums, a yangchun [a plucked string instrument], an erhu [a two-string Chinese fiddle] and a Chinese flute," pointed out Wong Chi-ping, the director of the Taipei Municipal Chinese Classical Orchestra. "We, therefore, fielded six of our finest musicians to the Taipei concert event."

"The symphony has been based on the film music and it takes listeners through the emotional world of the three movies," Shore explained. "If you know the book and the film, the music takes you right back."

Of the music heard in the Taipei concert, described as "a classical symphony" where not one of the 100 players or instrumentalists and 100 singers was dispensable, Shore said, "I wanted the music to feel old. The primary focus of the music is the 19th century. But a lot of the 20th century has been put into it, too."

He remarked that the choral section of the symphony with six movements is "in the tradition of the grand opera of the 19th century." But "it is also modern," he added.

Although the London Philharmonic Orchestra has recorded his music, noted Shore, "it has a new freedom to it if played away from a recording studio and in a concert."

Pianist performs for Sta. Isabel's music library

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

PIANIST Cristine Coyiuto will give a solo recital at 7 p.m. on March 15 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Little Theater.

The recital is a fund drive for the Sta. Isabel College of Music, which is celebrating its Diamond Jubilee Year. Proceeds will go to the music department's library.

Coyiuto is an alumna of the Sta. Isabel College of Music where she studied with the legendary concert pianist and pedagogue, the late Rosario Picazo.

She will perform Brahms' "Klavierstücke," Op. 118 and "Faschingsschwank aus Wien," Op. 26; Rachmaninoff's Six Preludes, Op. 32, and Ravel's "Gaspard de la Nuit."

Coyiuto attended the Juilliard School of Music where she earned her Master of Music degree under Jacob Lateiner. Grants and awards enabled her to study in Europe under noted pedagogues such as Gaby Casadesus, Fou Ts'ong, Nikita Magaloff and Philippe Entremont.

She was a laureate of the Academie Internationale de Musique "Maurice Ravel" in St. Jean-de-Luz, France, and Geneve Conservatoire in Switzerland.

She is a graduate of the famed Juilliard School of Music

Coyiuto has given recitals in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, France, Switzerland, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the Philippines. She has appeared as soloist for Vancouver Symphony, Vancouver Chamber Orchestra, New Westminster Orchestra, Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse, Singapore Symphony, Manila Symphony Orchestra, Manila Chamber Orchestra, and the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra.

She has been heard on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Singapore Broadcasting, Radio Hong Kong and Radio Taiwan.

In the Philippines, she had a solo recital at the CCP main theater in 2003, and was the featured soloist of the PPO in 2004, both of which critically acclaimed.

Tickets are at P1,500 and P500 (for students). Call 8131866 and 0917-8388903; fax 8939509.



CRISTINE Coyiuto

Italian film festival at the CCP

THE PHILIPPINE-ITALIAN Association and the Cultural Center of the Philippines present "Italian Film Festival—2005," ongoing at the CCP Little Theater.

Following the official invitational screening, the festival will proceed from March to December with 10 more films, representing a varied spectrum of the artistic talents of Italian film directors and movie stars.

The films will be screened free of charge at the CCP Dream Theatre on designated Tuesdays, from March 8 to Dec. 13, with a matinee at 4 p.m. and an evening show at 7 p.m. Tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Oscar-winning director Franco Zeffirelli starts the ball rolling with his comedy-drama, "Un Té Con Mussolini" (Tea With Mussolini), starring a line-up of British stars, including Judi Dench, Maggie Smith and Joan Plowright, with American pop icon Cher thrown in for good measure.

Paolo Virzi's "Caterina Va in Città" (Caterina Goes to Town), to be shown in March, is a comedy that pokes fun at the politics of Italy's middle class, its leftist intelligentsia and its emergent New Right.

The April offering is "La Finestra Di Fronte" (Facing Window), a drama-romance directed by Ferzan Ozpetek. The movie is about a woman accountant who is overworked and stuck in a dull marriage, and has to painfully re-examine what she wants out of life.

May's offering, "Io Non Ho Paura" (I Am Not Scared), is loosely based on a dramatic true story of a boy kidnapped from Milan and his coming-of-age in cruel captivity. Director Gabriele Salvatores elicits a fine performance from young Giuseppe Cristiano in the lead role.

Director Silvia Soldini's "Pane e Tulipani" (Bread and Tulips) uses comedy and romance to portray the adventures of a middle-aged neglected housewife and mother who has been abandoned by her family and seeks her own life by hitchhiking to Venice.

The dramatic movie "I Cento Passi" (A Hundred Steps) tells the story of a young man living 100 steps away from a Mafia boss and who stands up to his criminal activities. The movie won the best screenplay award at the Venice Film Festival.

For August, there is the drama, "Respiro" (Breath), which harks back to a time when life in one particular corner of the deep south of Sicily, Lampedusa, couldn't have been simpler. Directed by Emanuele Crialese, the movie was welcomed as "a neo-realist throwback with a modern face."

Another screen drama, "Le Fate Ignoranti" (The Ignorant Fairies), directed by Ozpetek, follows the story of Antonia and Massimo whose 15-year marriage crum-



bles after a car accident and the emergence of a secret life in one of the characters.

The 1978 kidnapping and murder of Aldo Moro, at that time a leading Italian politician, is dramatized in "Buongiorno, Notte" (Good Morning, Night) through the eyes of one of his assailants—a confused young woman in the ranks of the Red Brigade. The movie is directed by Marco Bellocchio.

"Il Postino" (The Postman), directed by Michael Radford, will be screened in November. It is a drama-romance about the exiled Chilean poet Pablo Neruda and the shy fisherman he takes under his wing. This movie was Oscar-nominated for Best Actor, Best Director, Best Picture, Best Adapted Screenplay, and Best Music.

The December screening will be announced later. Call 8151310.



UP Gawad Plaridel 2005

THE UP College of Mass Communication is now accepting nominations for the second UP Gawad Plaridel, which recognizes Filipino media practitioners who have excelled in any of the media (print, radio, film, television, and new media) and have performed with the highest level of professional integrity in the interest of public service. This year, the award will be given to an outstanding practitioner in film.

The award is named after Marcelo H. del Pilar (nom de plume, "Plaridel"), the selfless propagandist whose stewardship of the reformist newspaper La Solidaridad helped crystallize nationalist sentiments and ignite libertarian ideas in the 1890s.

Like Plaridel, the awardee must believe in the vision of a Philippine society that is egalitarian, participative and progressive, and in media that are socially responsible, critical and vigilant, liberative and transformative, and free and independent. Eligible for the awards are all liv-



ing Filipino individuals who have excelled in filmmaking, as a producer, director, actor, scriptwriter, production designer, cinematographer, musical scorer. Aside from their probity and integrity, these practition-

ers must have produced a body of work marked by excellence and social relevance and recognized by national and international awards.

Only nominations from institutions will be accepted. These institutions may include media corporations, professional media associations, media advocacy groups, educational institutions, cultural foundations, and NGOs. All current full-time faculty and staff of the UP College of Mass Communication are disqualified from the nomination.

Deadline is April 1. The UP Gawad Plaridel 2005 recipient will be known by June 15.

The award is given on July 4 in commemoration of del Pilar's death anniversary. The awardee will receive a trophy (designed by National Artist Napoleon Abueva) and a cash award of P100,000, and will deliver a lecture called the Plaridel Lecture, which will address an issue relevant to the state and practice of Philippine media.

Call the UP CMC Office of Extension and External Relations at 9206864. Visit cmc.upd.edu.ph. Nomination forms and award guidelines can be downloaded from this site.



LEVEL 1C students as Hungarian Czardas: (first row from left) Anarosa Garcia, Josephine Abesamis, Christine Dator, Mariel Enrile-Iton; (second row from left) Yvonne Casas (1B), Jasmine Habulan, Isobel Yap, Ariana Ramos and Francie Dur

Miriam Ballet presents 'Odette'

RIDGEPOINTE Ballet Conservatoire Inc. with Miriam College presents "Odette," a children's ballet adaptation of the Swan Lake story on March 5 at 7 p.m. at Teatro Aguinaldo in Quezon City.

Direction, libretto and choreography are by Liza de la Fuente-Castañeda, with additional choreography by Katherine Sanchez, Paola E. Yamsuan and Eileen Montemayor.

Over 100 students from the Child Study Center to the high-school levels participate in this event.

"Odette" features Katherine Sanchez as Odette/Odile; Nino Guevarra as Prince

Seigfreid; and Lans de Leon as Von Rothbart.

With this presentation, Miriam Ballet marks its 15th season offering under the artistic direction of De la Fuente-Castañeda. This year, Miriam Ballet offers you another outstanding opportunity to witness the growing number of young terpsichores in its ranks.

"Odette" was also staged at the Miriam Cafetorium on Feb. 17-18.

For inquiries on Miriam Ballet's summer program and SY 2005-2006, call 0919-4545441. The production is with the special participation of Kenny Rogers, VSSF and Cowhead Milk.

Join the Maningning Miclat award for poetry

THE MANINGNING Miclat Art Foundation is now accepting entries for the 2005 Maningning Miclat Poetry Awards Competition in English, Filipino and Chinese.

The competition is open to poets 28 years old and younger. Contestants may join any or all of the three language divi-

sions but can submit only one entry per division. An entry must consist of at least eight but not more than 15 poems.

The Maningning Miclat Poetry Awards is named after the late multi-awarded artist, trilingual poet and writer, translator and teacher.

Miclat left behind a book of poetry written in English, Chinese and Filipino, "Voice from the Underworld" (Anvil,

2000), a National Book Award finalist. She was recognized during the International Women's Year held in Beijing in 1995 as one of the world's top-rated 39 women poets writing in Chinese.

Deadline is on April 15. Visit www.maningning.com and www.poetrysky.com, or e-mail acmiclat2004@yahoo.com; kaisa@philonline.com, and aliww@admu.com.ph.

Call 0918-9057311; Kaisa (tel. no. 5266796); Aliww (4266001 loc 5811).

Grand prize winners will receive cash awards amounting to P28,000 each, and a trophy by sculptor Julie Lluch during the awards night at the CCP Little Theater on Sept. 25. A fund-raising concert will be held at the same time, which will benefit the Maningning Miclat Art Foundation and the Quezon flood victims.



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In the Luce, music's didacticism with heart

By Ian Rosales Casocot
PDI Visayas Bureau

THERE is no disliking the songs of Lito Camo and his ilk. Unlike the vocal minority of people who have missed out on the whole spirit of irony and the rewards of pun, double entendre, and other poetic *ka-ek-ekan*, one can appreciate the subtle and sometimes in-your-face implications of these songs.

"Bulaklak," at once familiar and playful, never fails to tickle our fancy despite public protest about "pornographic message." But when you hear the recent radio hit, "Basketball," it strikes you that no matter the skimpy get-up of the singers, the songs are nonetheless hummable, often unforgettable.

Novelty songs have their place in the pop cultural banquet and, like the music of Yoyoy Villame, Camo's music may, in time, gain a kind of respectability—perhaps even be dissected by cultural pundits for its social impact.

In the long run, however, one seeks ultimately for meatier music. Something that transcends the banal, and makes us see that message matters even more than the instant gratification of pop favorites.

That is why it is always refreshing to hear Joey Ayala perform. His distinctive sound—at once tribal and postmodern—gets you going, and by the end of the performance, you are surprised to know that you have learned something substantial about life, too.

It is exactly that kind of musing that keeps you grounded even after the last notes have been played in Ayala's one-night concert, the aptly titled "Kwentuhan, Kantahan, Kalikasan, Atbp.," at the Luce Auditorium, in Dumaguete City.

Heart is key to the concert's success, and more so the tidbits of welcome trivia you gain from hearing the musician comb over his years of experience.

We learn, for example, show-biz *tsismis* about Lea Salonga and Aga Muhlach. Or biodiversity. Or Chinese pirates in the Philippines early in the last century. Or how eagles sound when mating. Or how the Assumptionista



JOEY Ayala

colegiala accent originated from the Visayan twang of yayas transplanted in rich households in Manila. Or power relations. Or dialectic materialism, "whatever that means," Ayala intones.

What one likes about Ayala's music are the stories he tells. In an age where a typical song has no meaning anymore, it is refreshing to listen to music that talks about us and our world. It is gentle didacticism, with heart—and sliced green mango dipped in spicy vinegar with oyap, on the side.

There were his signature songs, including "Walang Hanggang Paalam" and the iconic "Karaniwang Tao," as well as the crowd-pleasing "Maglakad" and "Tabi Po." In "Agila," he talks about the environment through the metaphor of the Philippine eagle. "When we no longer see eagles flying, that means there

are no more forests to sustain them," Ayala informs us, before he segues to the song.

"Organik" is a kind of novelty song rendered in "*colegiala* speak," this one focusing on our varied identities, on "*sari-saring buhay*." In "Batangbakal," a man caught in the middle of traffic finds laughter and sadness in the lives of the *batang bakal*. He talks about street children and the effect of the environment on the artist, and plays around with his main metaphor, which presents us with rich ambiguities of meaning—the image of coins, or the street children themselves toughened by life. This is punctuated with a knowing estimation of the country's plight, as in the refrain, "Ang kapal naman ng trapik na ito."

Angry song

"Classroom 101," a song written in anger, has its roots in Ayala's visit to Marawi, and from his conversation with a teacher who works in a classroom with bulletproof doors. In "Mindanao," he turns hopeful. "If I sing about peace often enough," he says, "maybe it will come true." In "Little Brown Man," he tells us it is no joke to live in America, as most Filipinos dream of doing.

In "Kung Kaya Mong Isipin," Ayala hits his stride, and gives us perhaps the very theme of

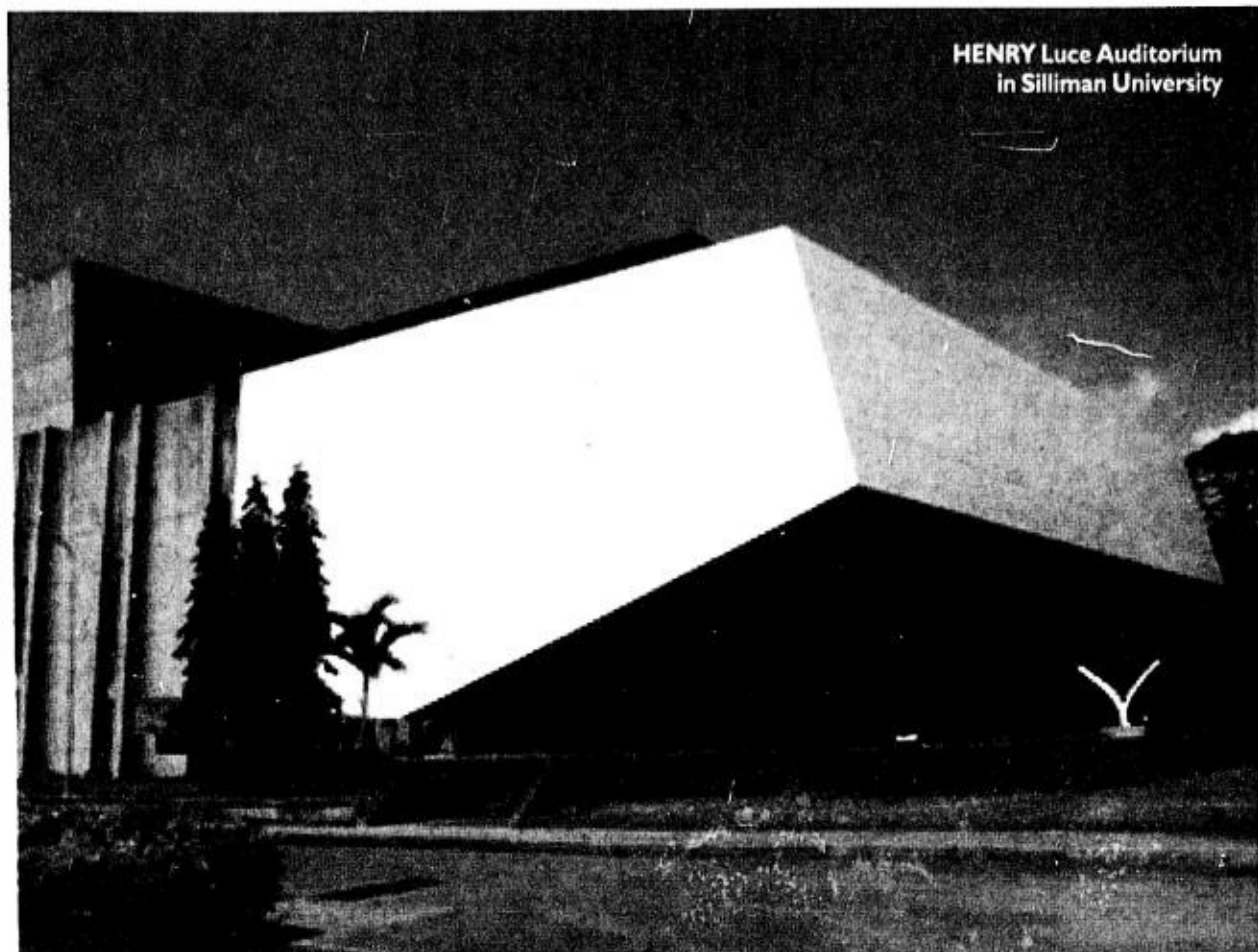
his life of music. He sings, and we learn: "Kung kaya mong isipin / kaya mong gawin / Isa-isang hakbang lang, ikaw'y mararating / Tulad ng puno na galing sa binhi / Ang mga dakilang gawa'y mula sa guniguni."

For the supposed Cultural Center of the South, Dumaguete's Luce Auditorium—one of the premier venues for top cultural acts from around the country, and from around the world—Ayala's concert may be the sign of better things still coming for a city growing alarmingly accustomed to ho-hum cultural fares, reined in by a disastrously conservative (nay, quasi-religious, like the Taliban's) climate. True artistry, especially one that has something significant to say about the way we live now, will prevail. And that gives us much hope, at least culturally.

On March 3, the British actress Linda Marlowe, courtesy of the generous and far-seeing souls in Silliman University's Cultural Affairs Committee and the good folks over at the British Council, comes to town with the latest of her acting showcases, this time in "No Fear," where she portrays a 100-year old circus artist looking back at her many careers, while performing a high-wire act on a trapeze.

That is definitely something to see.

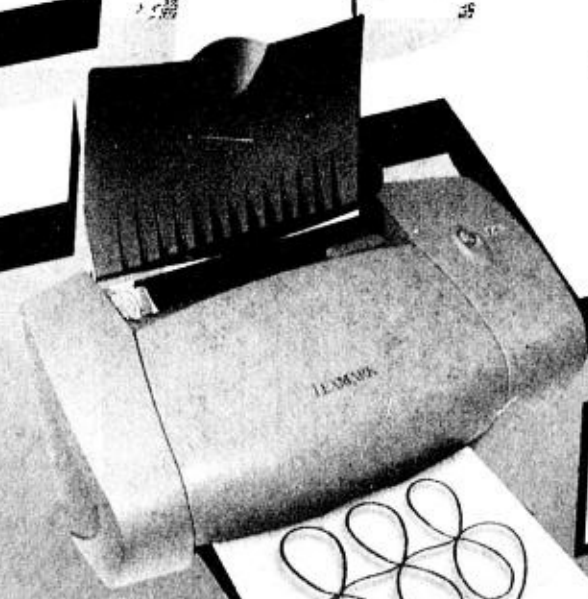
It is always refreshing to hear Joey Ayala perform live. His distinctive sound, at once tribal and postmodern, gets you going



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Kid readers take to the Old Masters



COVER of Grace Dacanay-Chong's "Ragamuffin Kid: The Boy Without a Smile"

By Neni Sta. Romana-Cruz
Contributor

A MONTH after the sleek new look of the Ayala Museum was opened, four children's books carrying on their covers the paintings of Fernando Amorsolo, Juan Luna and Fernando Zobel in the Ayala Collection were launched.

The series brings together outstanding writers and illustrators of children's literature today. And because the publisher is not exactly saddled with meager resources, these books carry a professional and polished look which makes them stand out.

Even adult readers may find it intriguing how the authors have fashioned stories based on the different paintings.

"Fruit Stand," by Maria Elena Paterno, with illustrations by Robert Alejandro, Ayala Foundation, Inc., 2004, based on Fernando Zobel's "Maiden Beside Fruit Stand," may be considered Paterno's comeback. Well-loved for her graceful and flowing narration, as in "Sampaguita," about a sampaguita child vendor, and "The Girl Who Fell from the Sky," a collection of folk tales, she has been kept busy as a full-time teacher and administrator of the progressive Beacon School.

Paterno explores in very imaginative ways the levels of meaning beyond what is obvious in the painting. Anastasia is the 12-year-old girl seated beside the fruit stand who indulges in a favorite pastime—making up stories about persons who walk by.

She imagines one pretty woman in a rush, another one with her hair bundled up in a tight bun as an acrobat rushing to rehearsal. The latter has got to be an acrobat because all she has for lunch is an apple, and this means she has to stay light for the job.

Anastasia imagines another woman with hip-long hair, red lips and "eyebrows like question marks at the top of her eyes," as a mermaid surfacing on land in search of her prince. She feels "knives going through her legs" as she walks and it is the mangoes she bought which would ease the discomfort.

Anastasia sustains her imagination through conversation with her best friend, Crispin, a talking cat who even critiques her drawings. Of the woman with the red lips, he says, "Only dolls should look like that."

KID/F4

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'Wala Lang' is serious fun

By Ruel S. De Vera

"Wala Lang: Files (Funny & Serious) On Youthful Being and Nothingness"
By Bud Tomas
Milflores Publishing, Inc., Quezon City
2004, 146 pages

PEOPLE write for all sorts of reasons. For Jaime Nathaniel "Bud" Tomas, it was something different from his toiling in law school. "Allergic reactions prevented me from taking refuge in alcohol. Sports just weren't my bag. Cable TV, with all its channels with nothing on, eventually got boring. Malling took money, a resource I had in short supply," he writes in the introduction.

Tomas, now a thirtysomething lawyer working for the Supreme Court, began writing essays that he would e-mail to his friends, observations about the world around him, a process that he clearly enjoyed. "I loved writing the way I talked, with little side-trips and irrelevant tangents," he adds. Thus was born "Wala Lang," a funny and thoughtful collection of essays on a seemingly random bunch of topics.

The 42 essays in "Wala Lang" of various length and levels of hilarity, are crafted with Tomas's abiding, child-like sense of wonder coupled with a wisecracking mentality and a capacity for clever introspection. His prose is simple and direct, never attempting to stun the reader with overheated vocabulary or forced profundity. Instead, Tomas simply wants to share what he thinks of what's happening around him—and the results are so genuinely affecting, so self-deprecating and sincere, that it's hard not to just sit back and savor it.

Tomas recalls growing up in Kalaw Hill, remembers the simple games they used to play and the environment they were played in, memories that are powerful in their simplicity and the realization that those times are long gone. Off to Ateneo High School and things really start to rock. Tomas, a child of the 1980s and a product of "Sesame Street" viewing, begins to chronicle his adventures with more detail.

Bizarre

Thus we are greeted with such joyfully bizarre incidents like the time a teacher screamed at Tomas' class to "stop the music," at which point, the entire class broke into their version of the Village People song, "You Can't Stop The Music." Or the time a fire in the school cafeteria led to a scene straight out of a John Hughes movie. Or how staying up with friends at 3 a.m. led invariably to strange debates: "The talks turned to topics of who would win in a no-hold barred fight: the Smurfs or the Care Bears? Or who's more annoying: Bat-Mite or Scrappy Doo? or who's more of a babe: Daphne of Scooby-Doo fame or Melody of Josie and the Pussycats? Or who would win: Astro Boy or Godzilla? And I shudder when I recall how seriously those dream contests were analyzed and how heated the arguments could get."

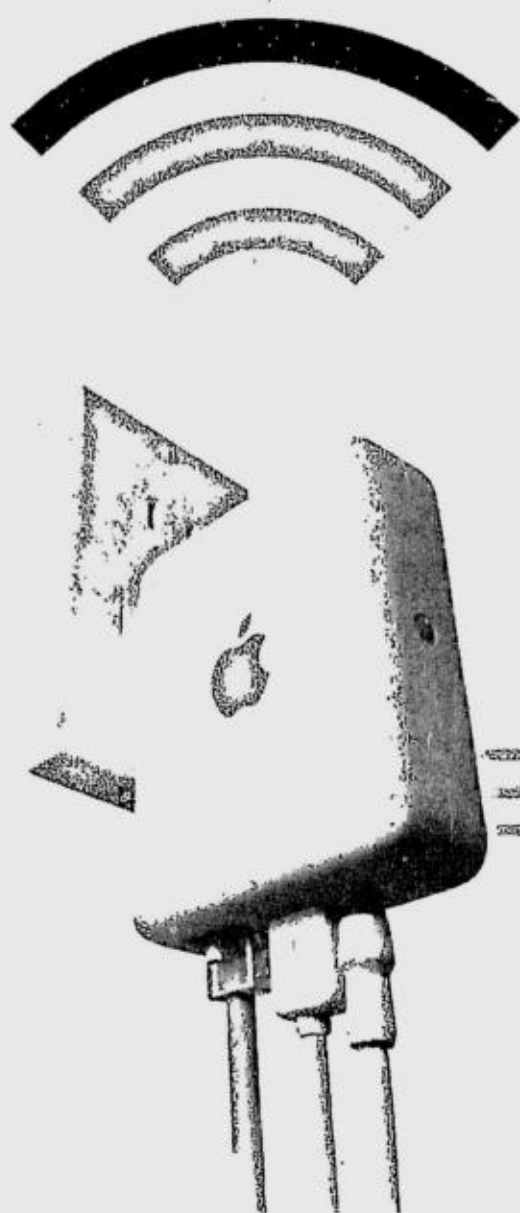
Off to UP now for college

and later on to the UP College of Law, and Tomas tackles every little aspect of student life, all of it full of his trademark deadpan humor and, no matter how tangential or peripheral, his strangely effective asides. Aside from his survey on the vagaries of life as a UP student, it's Tomas's quest to survive law school and conquer the bar exams that will grab the reader, as one starts to root for him amid the many and admittedly oddball obstacles strewn in his way.

Yet Tomas is at his best when simply reflecting on the mysteries of living, and the challenges they pose to him. For example: the Rubik's Cube: "Well, I just couldn't do the puzzle. All I'd accomplish was one face, while my friends who went to Philippine Science held contests to see who could solve it in the shortest time. So I came up with my own way of solving it... I took the cube apart, then put it back together so all the faces were complete." Just how many readers will react secretly (or not so): yep, did that, too. It is an occurrence that happens often when reading "Wala Lang." The lack of pretension wins the reader over, just as the realization that Tomas lives a very strange life bowls the reader over as well, though we probably have similarly strange lives—we just never notice. "We live in a disturbing universe," Tomas notes. Indeed—and a funny one, too.

"Wala Lang" becomes most illuminating when Tomas ponders seemingly ordinary questions with intelligence and, well, weirdness. Such as why plastic flowers would be better as a Valentine's Day gift. Or when Tomas remembers his first car, a Brasilia that took a licking but kept on ticking.

Beyond that, "Wala Lang" is Tomas's celebration of everyday discoveries and experiences: a friendship between Bugoys, an almost extemporaneous road trip to Pagudpod ("formerly known as Blair"), the lure of left-over lasagna, life in Lawyerland, and what exactly is in Cali Shandy. Yet Tomas also writes sincerely and offers, like an open hand, his thoughts on life today and why we live it that way. When Tomas discusses his terrible eyesight, he realizes what's important: "I'll enjoy the smile on the face of a friend and share the pain when tears run down that face. I'll look for answers and thank the stars for whatever light they shed for me to see by."

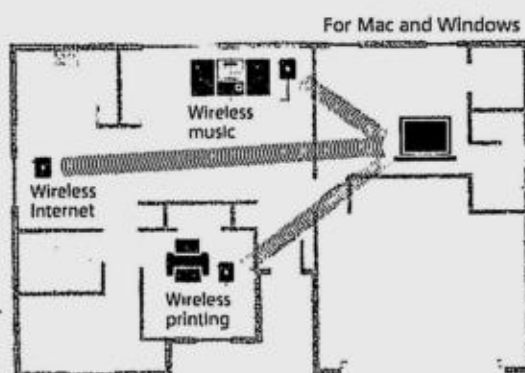


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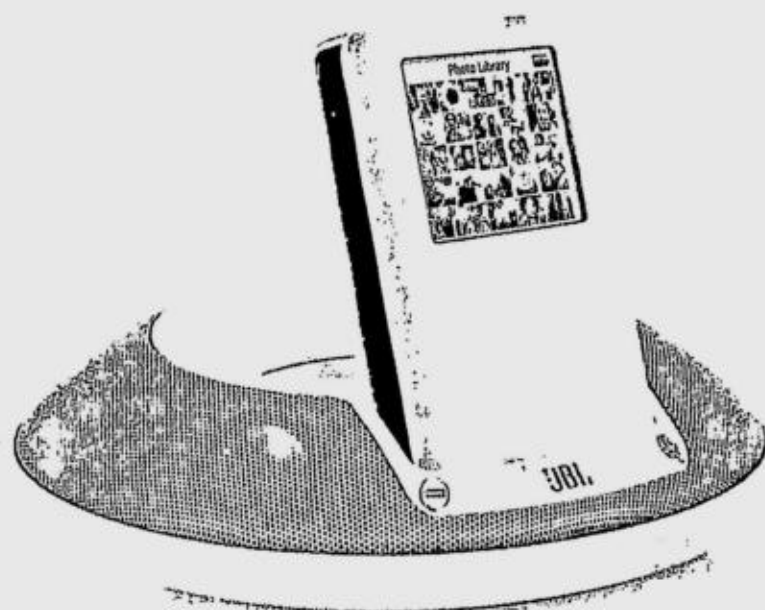
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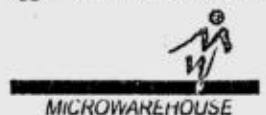
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Wala Lang

FILES (FUNNY & SERIOUS) ON
YOUTHFUL BEING AND NOTHINGNESS

Bud Tomas



Milflores Publishing, Inc.

Applications to 12th Iligan national writers workshop now accepted

THE MINDANAO Creative Writers Group and the MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology are accepting applications to the 12th Iligan National Writers Workshop (INWW) to be held on May 2-5 in Iligan City.

Panelists this year are Rosario Cruz Lucero, Erlinda Kintanar Alburo, Jaime An Lim, Leoncio P. Deriada, Merlie Alunan, Tim Montes, German V. Gervacio, Steven Patrick Fernandez and this year's keynote speaker, the fictionist and Director of the De La Salle University's Bienvenido N. Santos Creative Writing Center, Vicente G. Groyon.

Fifteen (15) slots, five each from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao are available for writing fellowships to the INWW.

Applicants are required to submit five po-

ems, or, one short story, or, a one-act play in Filipino, English or in Cebuano, Hiligaynon. Kinaray-a, Waray (with translations) along with the applicant's biodata, two 2X2 photos and a certification that his/her work is original. Submit a hard copy and a 3.5 diskette with the manuscripts encoded in MS Word. Unpublished works are preferred.

Writing fellows will be given free board and lodging and a travel allowance. No applications or manuscripts will be accepted if sent by fax or e-mail. Applicants are also advised to keep copies of their manuscripts since these will not be returned.

Send all applications to the 12th INWW director, Christine Godinez-Ortega, c/o OVCRE, MSU-IIT, Iligan City. For more information, call Pat Cruz at 63-3516131, or 2214050 to 55 loc. 113, or e-mail at ovcre-mepc@sulat.msilut.edu.ph

Textula Pinoy winners warn of environmental crisis

THE DARK outcome of man's neglect of the environment in the proverbs of Remigio Alvarez Alva, a graduate of Manuel L. Quezon University, and Rolando Yape, a graduate of Polytechnic University of the Philippines, bested 10,000 other entries in the final week of Textula Pinoy.

Jamin Domingo, Pedro Funilas III, Enrico Torralba, Mandy Centeno, Arnel Vitor, Jess Ferrer, Arnulfo Sambajon and Loi Landicho are consolation-prize winners.

National Artist Virgilio Almario, chair of the board of judges, expresses admiration for the new poets that emerged victorious in this week's result.

"It means that more people are learning the concise art of proverb-making," he added.

*Sirang payaw sa Banawe
Sumugat kay Idyanale.*

—Remigio Alvarez Alva

*Nilalambat ko'y salinas,
Huli'y lata ng sardinas.*

—Rolando P. Yape

*Inubo ang Inang Mundo,
Sa usok ng 'yong tambutso.*

—Jamin Domingo

Patabang hindi organik,

Sa lupa't tubig ay lintik.

—Enrico C. Torralba

*Tunay ang hula ng pantas.
Mas mahal ang tubig sa gas*

—Pedro Funilas III

*Ang kumakalbo sa bundok
Kalbo ang isip at tuktok.*

—Mandy Centeno

*Ginto ni Maria Makiling
Sa kaingi'y naging uling.*

—Arnel Vitor

*Nangisda ako sa lawa,
Nalambat ko ay garapa.*

—Arnulfo Sambajon

*Sa dumi ng hangin ngayon
Kamataya'y slow motion.*

—Jess Ferrer

*Abal Ginoong marino
Muro-ami'y ihinto mo.*

—Loi Landicho

The winning entries will be compiled in a book which will be released at the awarding ceremonies on March 18 at UP Call 9221830.

Textula Pinoy is sponsored by National Commission for Culture and the Arts, in cooperation with the Filipinas Institute of Translation Inc., Globe Telecom, and the UP Institute of Creative Writing.



YAO, IN HIS OWN WORDS

Yao Ming, the 7'5" Chinese center of the NBA Houston Rockets, has written his memoirs. Titled "Yao: A Life In Two Worlds," the book shows the sportsman as a thoughtful, opinionated young man whose insights extend far beyond the basketball court. His impressions of America and its culture as well as his views on the NBA are all contained in the book, which is also dotted with anecdotes of his on-court encounters with major NBA players like Shaquille O'Neal and Chris Webber. Available at all National Book Store.

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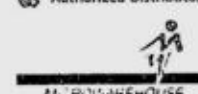
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Call for entries to Ramon Magsaysay essay tilt

SM is hosting the travelling exhibit, "The 4th Ramon Magsaysay Student Essay Competition @ SM," to coincide with the start of the 4th Ramon Magsaysay Student Essay Competition.

The roving exhibit will visit 12 SM malls nationwide, giving young people the opportunity to learn about the competition and be introduced to the lives and works of the Magsaysay Awardees.

Winners of the competition's maiden run in Korea are also included in the exhibit, a vehicle of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF) to connect the legacy of Magsaysay Awardees with the aspirations of young people.

High school and college students are invited to research and write on how the lives and the work of the Magsaysay awardees

influence them. Participants may submit two- to four-page essays on the theme, "Inspiring Me To Make A Difference: Personal Lessons From A Magsaysay Awardee."

Deadline for submitting entries is July 30, 2005.

To research and download entry forms, students may surf www.rmaf.org.ph, or e-mail essay@rmaf.org.ph, or visit the RMAF Asian Library. Publications offering data to researchers include the "Book of Record," a continuing compilation of the biographies of the awardees from 1958 when the first awards were given, and which is now on its 12th volume.

There are the "2002 Book of Citations" and its CD version, which incorporate all the official commendations. These are available at RMAF at discounted rates of P200

and P100, respectively.

Co-published with Anvil Publishing, Inc. are two popular books, "Great Men and Women of Asia" and "Young Pens For Young Minds," which consist of wonderful reads on the awardees. These are sold at all National Bookstore and Powerbooks.

The schedule of mall exhibits are:

SM North EDSA, March 8-11
SM Manila, March 22-25
SM Dasmariñas, April 5-8
SM Pampanga, April 19-22
SM Cebu, May 3-6
SM Iloilo, May 17-20
SM Davao, May 31-June 3
SM Cagayan de Oro, June 14-17
SM Baguio, June 28-July 1
SM Batangas, July 12-15
SM Makati, July 26-29
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New book club

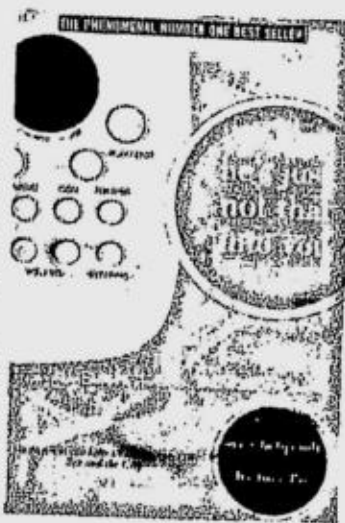
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For February, Powerbooks is featuring two books, "Citizen Girl" by Emma McLaughlin and Nicolas Kraus, and "He's Just Not That Into You" by Greg Behrendt and Liz Tuccillo.

Powerbooks is at Greenbelt 4 (7576428 to 29), 99, Alabang (8505662 to 63), and Glorietta Megamall (6352898 to 7527075).



UST holds Catholic press seminars

THE UST Journalism Society, the organization of AB Journalism students from the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the University of

Santo Tomas, will hold the 4th UST Catholic Journalism Seminar on March 4 at the Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City, and on March 5 at the Good Shepherd Cathedral of the Diocese of Novaliches.

The seminars, which are supported by The Varsitarian, the 77-year-old UST student paper, will have talks on topics to write about in the Catholic media, feature writing, news writing, and parish newsletter management. There will also be a workshop on issues affecting the Catholic media.

The seminar is open to students, parish workers, and anyone interested in Catholic journalism in the Philippines.

To speak in the seminar are Lito B. Zulueña of the Inquirer, Nestor Cuartero of Tempo, Bernardette Sto. Domingo of Business World, and Jeremiah Opiniano of the Consortium on Migration Journalism. Parish publication editors will also speak.

The seminars mark the first time that UST is holding the annual seminar in nerve-centers of the Catholic faith in Metro Manila. Junior Journalism classes are the organizers.

Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias will close the Novaliches seminar with a Mass. Registration fee is P175.

For the Santo Domingo seminar, call Immanuel Jay Avelino (0915-5222195, 0926-8702281, 0922-5011532) or Kriztel Marie Lorbes (0918-2990629). For the Novaliches seminar, call Jose Raoul Claveria (0916-2380756) or Kristine de Silva (0917-8242105). Log on to www.catholicjournalism05.tk.

Kid readers. . .

From page F1

What's her name, Barbie?"

The story also explores mother-daughter relationship and the extended family—an uncle and a grandmother.

"Ragamuffin Kid: The Boy Without a Smile" by Grace Dacanay-Chong, with illustrations by Beulah Pedregosa Taguiwalo, Ayala Foundation, Inc., 2004, is based on Juan Luna's "Ragamuffin." How intriguing it will be for children to discover the meaning of the polysyllabic world.

The painting's sad and troubled expression is well depicted in the touching story of a boy who finds a home and a name, so that he finally ceases to be just "Hoy!" or "Muchacho!" or "Indio!"

That the tale does not degenerate to sentimentality is a tribute to Chong's gift for storytelling. The story establishes the setting early on: "More than a hundred years ago, in the town of Badoc, Ilocos Norte..." This refers to the painter's place of birth.

Visually, the story is easiest to read among the four books, thanks to the design of Taguiwalo. Her art flows seamlessly with the narration, thoughtfully breaking up the text with illustrations which never distract—a layout that is particularly pleasing and kind especially to less proficient readers.

"The Boy with a Kite" by Carla M. Pacis, with illustrations by Robert Alejandro, Ayala Foundation, Inc., 2004, is based on Fernando Zobel's painting, while "The Lady with the Yellow Umbrella" by Lin Acacio-Flores, with illustrations by Liza Flores, Ayala Foundation, Inc., 2004, is based on Amorsolo's "Sunday Morning Going to Town." They are interesting stories as well, presenting slices of Philippine life unknown to today's children.

"The Boy with a Kite" is the child of an *hacendero* who discovers a friend in the son of the stable master. "The Lady with the Yellow Umbrella" deals with a season in the life of a rice farmer's family. The mysterious lady with the umbrella, not a *salakot* like the rest of the community, is, fittingly enough, a teacher newly arrived in the barrio.

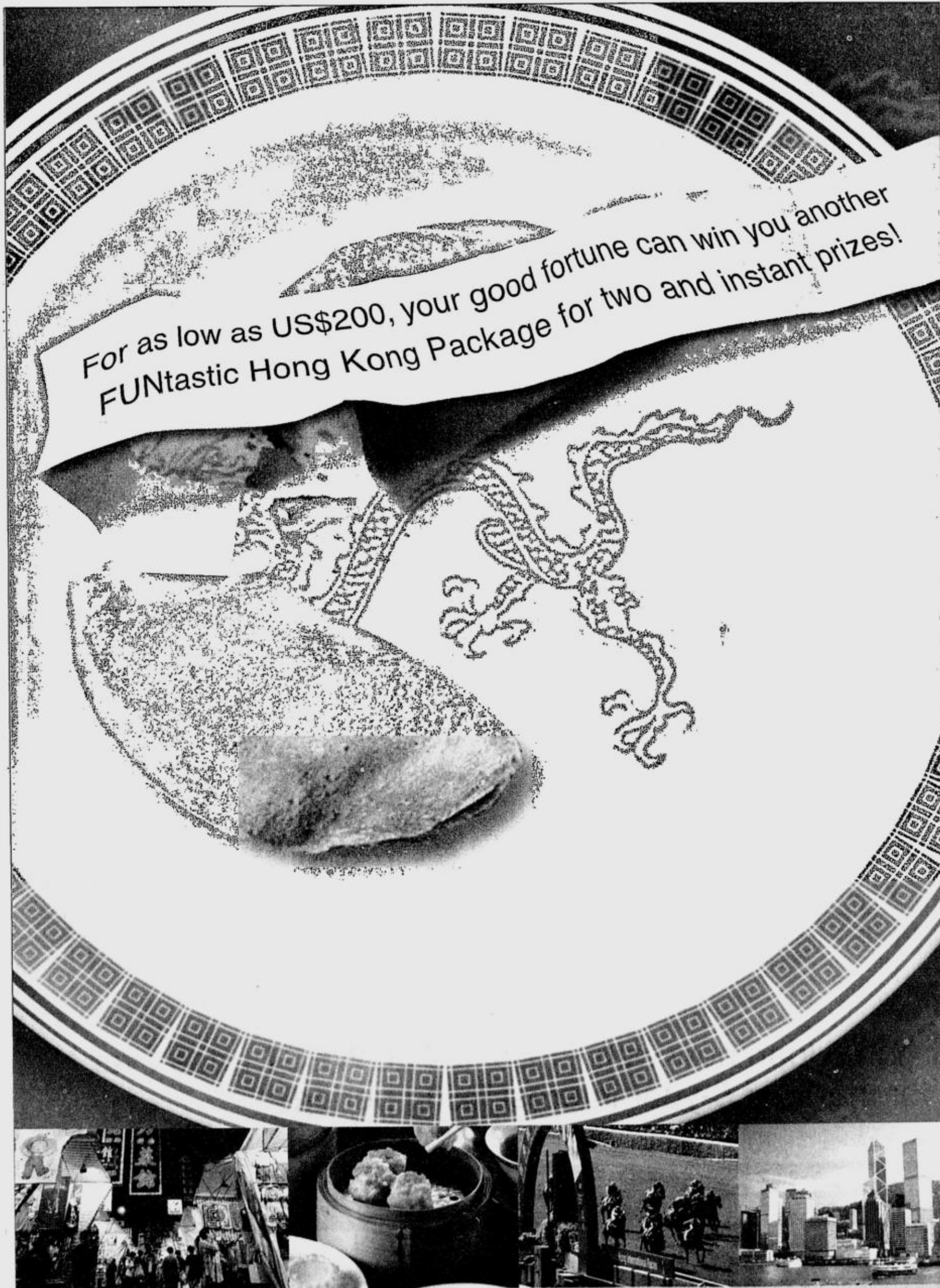
All four books are bound to be collector's items, and not only because they are printed on a limited edition. They carry the biographical sketches of the masters of Philippine art.

Another marketing support is the availability of products in the Ayala Museum Shop bearing the same paintings in mugs, stationery and bags.

Would that all these efforts make these pieces and the legendary names that produced them familiar to children and nurture a generation of readers and art lovers.

The author is a member of the Philippine Board on Books for Young People (tel. no. 3723548, or e-mail adarnahouse@adarna.com.ph).

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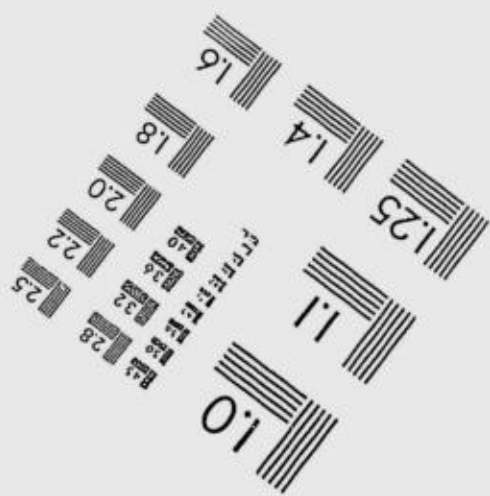
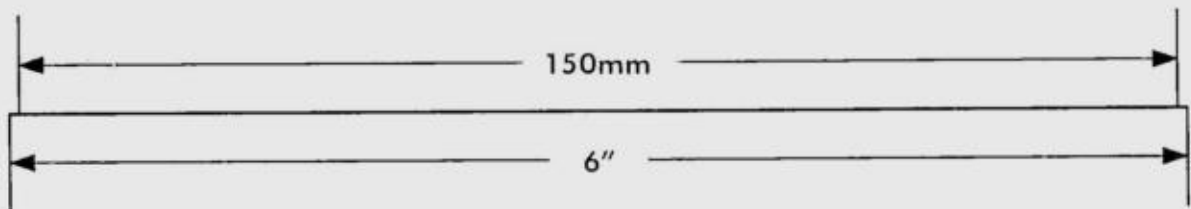
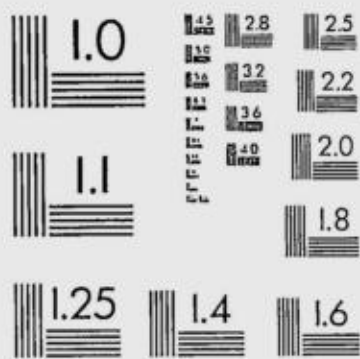
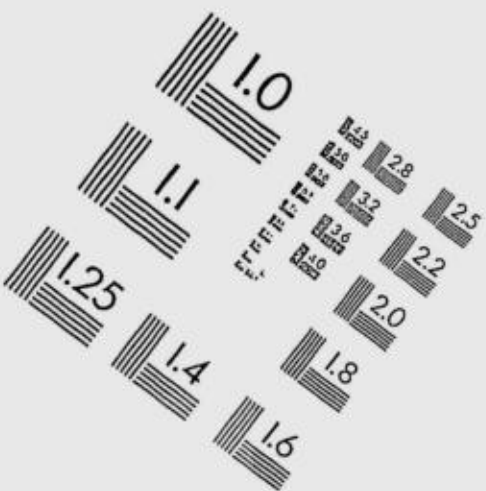
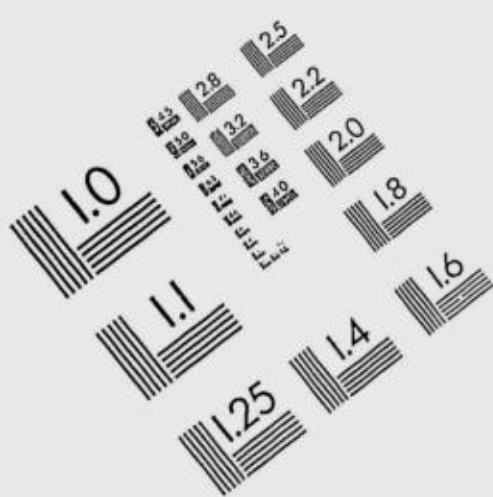
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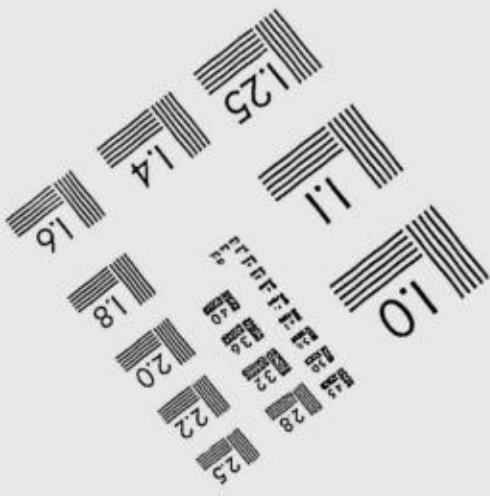
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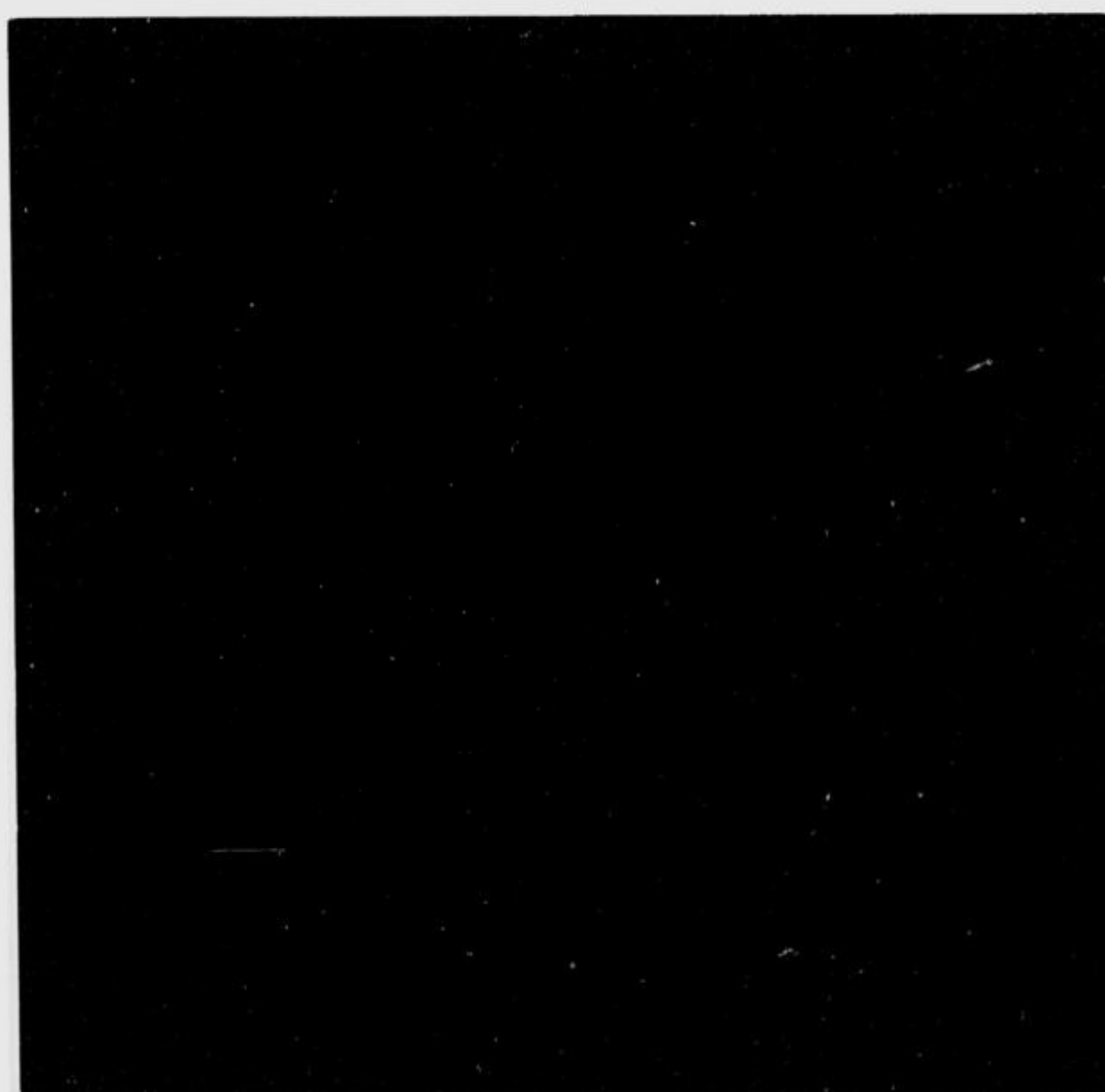
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